

INSIDE SOCCER

Registered with Australia Post as a publication PP224696/00050 - ISSN 1321-8980

JULY 27, 1999

**'COLE COMFORT'
SIMON COLOSIMO'S
MUM SPEAKS OUT ON THE
ANDY COLE INCIDENT. PAGE 7**



**PLUS ...
AUSSIE TRANSFERS,
NSL WARM-UP GAMES,
WORLD NEWS AND
WIN FRANK
FARINA'S BOOK ...**

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VIDDY'S BACK IN BLACK

ADELAIDE CITY SIGNS SOCCEROO STAR

By Aidan Ormond

Exciting news for the coming Ericsson Cup Football season. One of Australia's great international footballers is back. Soccerroo Aurelio Vidmar has returned to Australia to play for his hometown club Adelaide City.

After a distinguished career in Europe playing in the leagues of Belgium, Holland, Switzerland and the Spanish Primera, plus a season in the J-League with Hiroshima, this effective and free-scoring linkman of our last two World Cup campaigns will be playing on an NSL park near you.

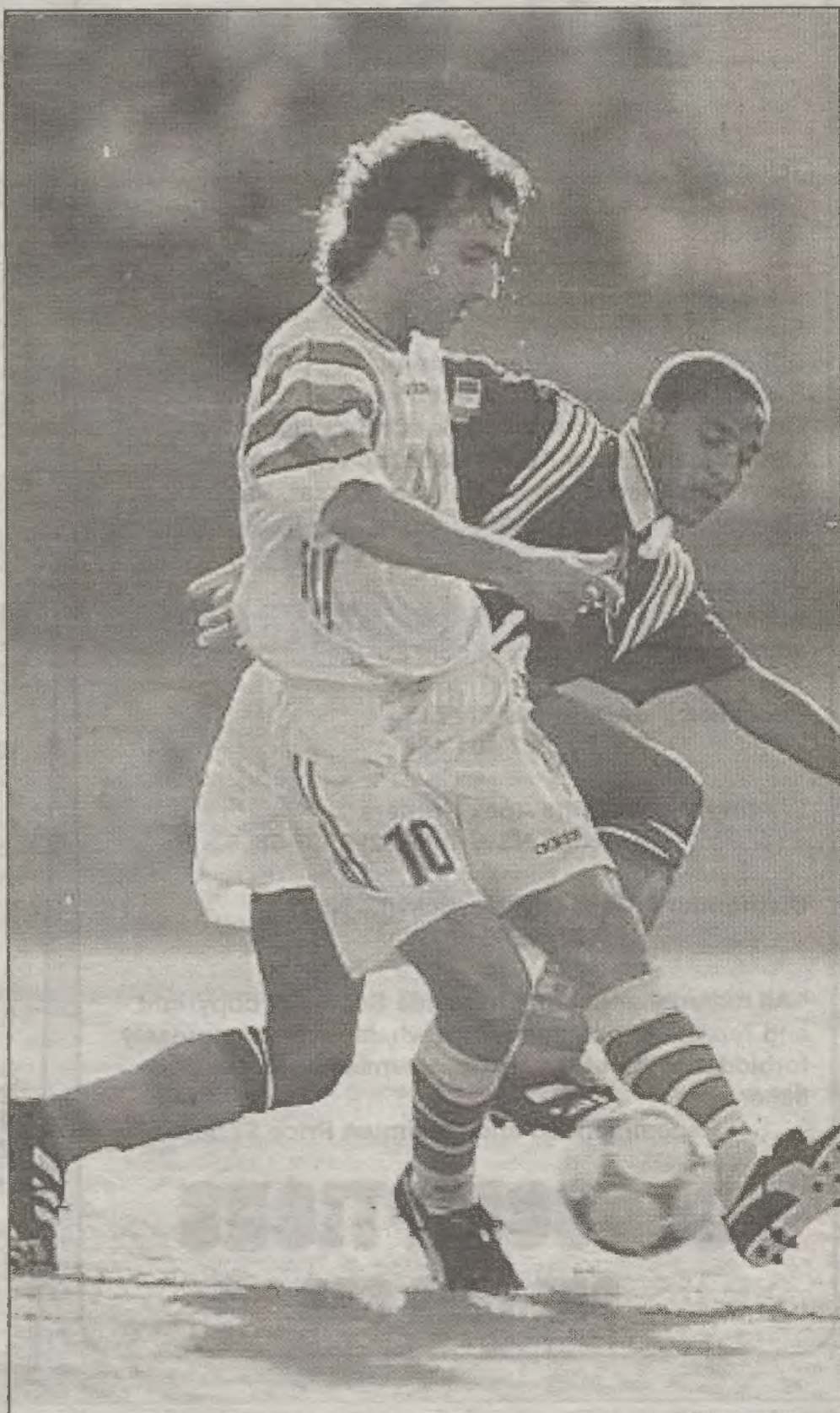
Adelaide City of course is the original club for both Vidmar brothers, Aurelio and Tony (who is currently with Glasgow Rangers).

At City, Vidmar will hook up with two other Soccerroo legends, Alex Tobin and Milan Ivanovic. Plus, with the signing of Ivan Zelic from Canberra Cosmos the 'new' Adelaide City look to be on the right track.

I say new because the club has some innovative plans in place to reposition this NSL foundation club as one for the entire Adelaide community (see interview with new General Manager Ned Coton on page three).

Last night, the newly-married Aurelio Vidmar took time out from a busy media schedule to chat about the ups-and-downs of his career, a career he feels still has three or four years to go here in Australia before a possible coaching role or even a media position.

Continued on page three



THE WEEK THAT WAS

This last seven days has been dominated by the Simon Colosimo/Andy Cole furore.

The good news is that Simon's operation on Saturday went exceedingly well. The surgeon was very happy and we send our best wishes to him for a speedy recovery.

However the issue that attracted much local and international media was the player's club, Carlton, seeking compensation for the loss (estimated to be 6-12 months) of one of their key players.

For a start, Carlton could have reaped considerable financial benefit from an overseas sale. And if this had not eventuated, coach Stuart Munro would have dearly loved his star defender to have joined what is already an impressive defensive line-up.

If Carlton's lawyers, Slater and Gordon, are able to secure compensation, (and at this point they are assessing the situation) it will send a clear message that wild tackles will not be tolerated. Just ask Kevin Muscat, who himself was subject to legal action after a nasty tackle.

Rene Rivkin is continuing his bid to be involved in soccer with an offer for the

marketing rights for the NSL. Some club chairmen have expressed their concern to Soccer Australia that this possible deal has not been done with the consultation of all the clubs.

Naturally they are worried that a deal like the long-term one struck by David Hill with Channel 7 would have similar results, i.e. selling the game short.

While Channel 7's coverage of local soccer has been scratchy at best (see our story relating to their net site talking point on page 8), Rene Rivkin has shown to be genuinely interested in pushing soccer and sees the obvious potential here for the world game. He should not be tarred with a similar brush, but the clubs have a point, that is, consultation is vital.

And finally one of our long-serving administrators, Ian Brusasco, has called it quits. Although the Queenslander has gone out all guns blazing (page 11), this should not detract from the service he has given to the game. The 1996 Grand Final will be one of the many memories he will have.

REAL FOOTBALL REAL GOOD VIEWS

Look we know money isn't everything and the simple pleasures in life are often the best, but money is handy, especially when you want to buy a harbourfront house worth over a million.

And if kids would like to play a sport that gives them those opportunities, then football, that is the real football, that is soccer, is the one for you.

One of Inside Soccer's many friends alerted us to a lovely little story in the Property section of the weekend Sun Herald.

With the heading 'Aussie Soccer Star outbids Arko', and a sub-heading 'Round ball game wins again, but rugby league dealt double blow', it relays how former Rugby League head honcho Ken Arthurson was outbid by an unnamed overseas-based Soccerroo's agent for a \$1.2 million harbourfront apartment in the North Shore of Sydney.

Apparently the pad is for the Soccerroo to 'stay in' when he's home. The player apparently also

Kewell views or Bozza's Bella Vista ... who cares whose it is, Aussie Soccer stars are buying up big.



intends purchasing more of the same.

Whoever it was, here is a humble soccer player, probably from the Western Suburbs, not long out of his teens, outbidding one of Rugby League's big wigs (who is in his fifties) for million dollar homes! How galling.

So next time someone goes on to you about how great other codes are, just tell them about some of the rewards soccer can offer those willing to dream and work hard.

Let's hope this 'unnamed' Soccerroo is home more often.

Inside Soccer

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Publisher: JAD Sports Pty Ltd
A.C.N. 087 401 456

Printing: Arncliffe Apex Printers
Arncliffe NSW Tel: (02) 9597 6866

Distribution: Wrapaway, Marrickville NSW
Tel: (02) 9550 1622

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SYDNEY UTD'S
DAVE RATCLIFFE

AURELIO VIDMAR'S BACK

continued from front page

Firstly, the recent Manchester United tour, and I asked him if he felt it was a useful exercise? "They were in the second week of pre-season. They were reasonably sharp but we gave them a good shock in the second game," he said. "It was a useful exercise, they needed a good hitout and we certainly gave that to them, plus we had a number of young lads from the Olyroos who will be better for it, so it was a useful exercise for both sides."

"Individually they are great, but there are eleven players who have to complement each other. They have won a lot of games in the last few minutes and the team spirit is there. The attitude is very English. A great side but they will be under pressure this year. They won't relax but everyone will be gunning for them," he observed.

As for Jaap Stam, and Vidmar was in awe of Man Utd's big Dutchman. "He was a bull, mate. I couldn't budge him; he's like a house! Bloody hell, he's big but he is also quick and he positions himself well."

"It's closed now for me," says the 32-year-old of his chances of playing in Europe again.

"I will be sort of fading away from view here in Adelaide! Look Aidan, after my year in Japan I would have loved to have had one more year over in Europe. I waited till the very last minute, because the first week of July the squads in Europe are usually finalised. It's probably a year earlier but I am still very excited to be back. These are changing and exciting times here at Adelaide City I am really looking forward to it."

And this enthusiasm is there for the national team also, but the uncertainty over appointing the coach is obviously something that concerns Vidmar.

"It's very frustrating," he laments. "It frustrates everyone. No-one knows when the next game is, who is playing, who is coaching. We have the Brazil games later this year but again there may be a problem with the getting the Euro boys back."

His career was on a high when he left Belgium, I wondered if he ever regretted leaving? "No," he said adamantly. "I spent four years there. I started with Kortrek, then Waragem. I then made the move to Standard Liege where I became the leading goalscorer, and we finished second on the ladder. I then I had all the aces in my hand so I moved to a great club like Holland's Feyernoord." (For an estimated five million which at the time made him the most expensive Aussie player).

"I didn't regret the move because you build a career with the lower clubs in order to play for a big club and that's what happened to me, I left Belgium for a big club like Feyenoord and the Spanish league later with Tenerife."

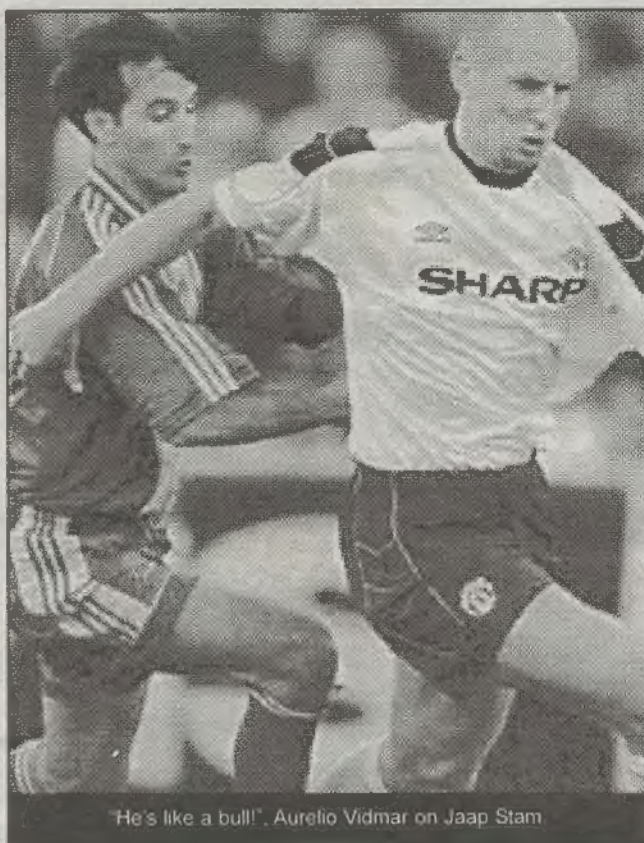
Things did not quite work out at Feyenoord. They had a strong attacking line-up and making the first team was difficult for a player who was in his prime. A loan move to Swiss side Sion gave him regular football, and he did not disappoint his new fans. As he puts it, "sometimes you have to take a step back to take two forward."

"I scored a lot of goals and won the Swiss Cup with Sion and then went to the Atlanta Olympics. After that I took two steps forward by signing with Tenerife."

However the move to a tourist paradise became a nightmare was the attacking midfielder. Well, I put everything down to adventure and experience," he noted philosophically. "It started off great in the first year. I played 25 games and we got to

the semis of the UEFA Cup, we were beaten by Germany's Schalke, who eventually won it."

"Unfortunately the second year we got a new coach, Victor Fernandez, and after four days of pre-season he told me he did not need me. I should have been told earlier (Fernandez was employed before the end of the previous season).



He's like a bull! Aurelio Vidmar on Jaap Stam

"He should have told me earlier. I had a million dollars US on my head also."

"Most clubs have their squads organized by early July so it was a bit late for me to find a new club," he said without a trace of bitterness.

"So I had to tough it out. I would train all week and stay home on the weekend! I wasn't involved at all. Needless to say I absolutely hated it because I wanted to play. I had to tough it out. Did not play one

second. I was just training. That's when mental toughness comes in to it. It wasn't easy for my wife either, but I like to think that I have mental toughness."

"I tried hard to stay focused because the national team was preparing for a World Cup campaign and I needed games to be sharp. My only games were with the national team, and I scored in some of the friendlies with Terry Venables' Socceroos after not playing for six months."

On the Venables era and the older Vidmar was effusive. "I learned a helluva lot from Terry and so did everyone else. You have respect for someone like that who has a ton of knowledge about the game. He has an aura about him, people sat up and listened to him. I am sure everyone misses him. I was quite confident that we could have qualified for the second round of France 98."

"Australia has to qualify for 2002 and of course it's still a dream of mine," he said. "I am not too fussed about the fifth placed South American team. Our team is a lot stronger than in 1993 when we played Argentina. Our players are in the strongest leagues in the world and the best team on the day will qualify," he added confidently.

But for now he is back in Adelaide, among friends and family, and one feels for a considerable stretch. Further, the changes occurring in the foundation NSL club have his total support. "The club has some exciting times ahead, and if they don't see these changes through, they will miss the bus. Just look at some of the other clubs, like Spirit. Adelaide City has too much tradition to be left behind."

As for the future, and Vidmar is open about his desire to stay in the game he loves so much. "I still want to be involved in the game. I would love to do that. If I can play another three or four years before, maybe, coaching. Then again it could be media, you never know in life do you."

Well, you can have a job with Inside Soccer any time. Aurelio, it's great having you back.

NED SLAM DUNKS THE PAST!

Ned Coton is a big lad. It's no surprise he has a basketball background. He also has a big job as the new General Manager of Adelaide City. And he is bursting with enthusiasm for his new club.

"It's a wonderful city and I've been warmly welcomed by the club," he said last night. "Adelaide is a beautiful city and I am really looking forward to getting on with things. I think in terms of Adelaide City, the bar has been raised by the likes of Northern Spirit and Perth Glory, and other clubs in Australia are recognising that we have to move with the times," he added.

"Adelaide City has a tremendous history and we don't want to lose our heritage. At the same time the premise for these changes is that we want to be around in the next fifty years, so we would like to build on what we have and step up a level."

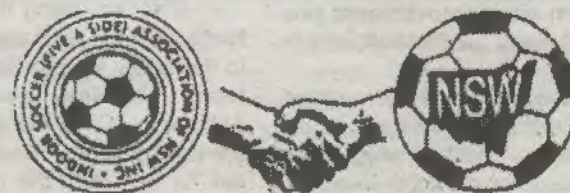
"We don't want to alienate our tra-

ditional fans, we want to build on and have a wider appeal. The way that you do it is by making some changes to the fundamentals, such as the logo, strip and the nickname of the team. For example, adding to the existing black and white colours, not changing it. We are doing all of this, however, in consultation with the fans, who are very important."

"And there will be announcements as we move forward and of course we look forward to keeping Inside Soccer readers fully informed," ended Coton.

So there it is, a new era for a grand old club? Let's hope so, they deserve better than the muddle Adelaide Sharks found themselves in, when they refused to embrace the entire Adelaide community.

These times they are a'changin'!



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TRANSFER UPDATE: IT'S BEEN BUSY!



"Hey Mile, we're finally going to make some money mate!" Parramatta Power signings Jacob Burns (left) and Mile 'goalmachine' Sterjovski.

By John Vrtaric

The off-season is often referred to as the funny season and the Australian one is long enough to give everyone the opportunity to indulge in lots of funny business. The season is still two months away so there is plenty of time for further funny business but the current facts, rumours and pure speculation on player movements provide plenty of news for football fans to digest.

The rumour mill brought some interesting, and exciting, possibilities to the upcoming season - most of which won't come to fruition ... unfortunately. Amongst the more exciting rumours were the possibility of England's Ian Wright and Matthew Le Tissier playing for Northern Spirit.

Alas, that story seems to have died a natural death - if local clubs can afford players of such calibre, even though they are at the end of their careers, it shows that we are making progress. But methinks that that is not the case and we can include them in the wild speculation category.

The big news overseas involving Australian players, of course, were the moves of Mark Bosnich to Manchester United and Paul Okon from Lazio to Fiorentina. A player without the profile of those two, Frank Juric, has made a significant move in Germany. His move from second division Fortuna Dusseldorf to first division team Bayer Leverkusen indicates the improvement that he has made since his move to Germany and he is now to reap the reward.

The last few years have seen an ava-

lanche of local players seeking their fortune overseas and this year is no exception. The most notable move during this off-season is the move of Sydney Olympic's Jason Culina to Amsterdam's Ajax in a million-dollar deal.

Another youngster taking the gold paved road to Europe is Carlton's Marco Bresciano who is joining former team mate Vince Grella at Italy's Empoli (who were relegated from Italy's Serie A at the end of last season).

A not so young Kresimir Marusic of Northern Spirit went seeking, cap in hand, to the newly formed Belgium first division team, Germinal Beerschot Antwerp. Apparently 'King Kres' did not impress the heavyweights at Antwerp so he took his ball further down the road to display his tricks to fellow first division club Lommel. A more impressed Lommel have come to the party and Marusic has secured himself a contract and a handy, though yet undetermined, fee for his former club.

Another familiar trend over the last few years has been the return of many of our expatriates coming home to finish, in many cases, illustrious careers.

Topping the list of returning heroes is Aurelio Vidmar who is returning to his old, and only, National League club, Adelaide City. Vidmar has recently completed his twelve-month contract with Eddie Thompson's Japanese club, Sanfrecce Hiroshima and comes back to Adelaide on a free transfer. Adelaide has also signed Ivan Zelic, younger brother of Ned, as a possible replacement for the ageing Milan Ivanovic.

A more surprising return is that of Alvin Ceccoli who is returning to his home town, Wollongong, after less than one season with AEK in the Greece First

Division.

With the admission of two new clubs to next season's competition the action was always going to be fast and furious on the local transfer market. And so it proved.

Within days of being admitted to the league Parramatta Power swooped on the financially stricken Sydney United. Having already signed United's coaches of last season, David Mitchell and Lawrie McKinna, Power had positioned themselves to move quickly on uncontracted United players.

Defenders David Barrett, Joe Vrkic, Richard Plesa and Michael Santalab put pen to paper as soon as a contract was placed in front of them; loyalty won the day and they followed their coaches. They were quickly followed by midfielders Steve Berry and Walter Ardone, goalkeeper Mike Gibson, striker Joel Griffiths and utilities, Danny Townsend

and Steve Eagleton.

Power had to wait a little longer for the prize recruits, Jacob Burns and Mile Sterjovski, as they were overseas with the Olyroo squad. The wait wasn't that long and both signed upon their return with star

striker, Sterjovski becoming Parramatta's highest paid player after rejecting a much higher, and much revised, offer from United president and benefactor, Marko Franovic.

Mitchell has further bolstered his squad with the addition of the skilful Milan Blagojevic and Stephen Laybutt, from Brisbane. Laybutt will only be joining Power after his three month stint with J-League team, Bellmare.

Meanwhile, Sydney United made their first capture with the signing of Northern Spirit youngster Eddy Bosnar, and is poised to swoop on a number of Sydney Olympic players released from the contract, as well as a couple from Melbourne sister club, Melbourne Knights.

Up to ten players are believed to have been released by Olympic - included amongst those are Mick Brennan, Norman

Tome, Leo Carle, Carlos Gonzales and Elias Augerinos.

Olympic has signed Gabriel Mendez, from Northern Spirit, Marcus Phillips, from Marconi and Lindsay Wilson, from Canberra, as the first part of a recruitment drive.

The Glory has made the most impressive local signing with the transfer of Kasey Wehrman from Brisbane. The talented youngster is looking to recapture his form of two years ago and tuition from the taskmaster, Bernd Stange, should help even more.

Perth's other signing is the versatile, and former Perth boy, AIS youngster Ivan Ergic but on the other hand they have lost virtually their entire central defence. Gavin Wilkinson has gone to the other newcomer, Auckland Kings, Danny Hay is poised to join Leeds United in a million dollar transfer (failing that he will most likely join Stuttgart), big Craig Deans has joined Carlton and expensive Italian recruit, Gianfranco Circati has been released.

Young Jamie Harnwell remains the only central defender looking forward to a big task come the season if Stange does not come back home with a signature of a European player (as is rumoured).

Another loss for Perth is Michael Garcia who is looking to build himself a career in Europe, while there is speculation that Danny Milosevic may be surplus to requirements as Perth may have signed one of the Petkovic brothers.

Northern Spirit have remained relatively quiet with the signing of two youngsters from the NSW Institute team, goalkeeper Jesse Kedwell-Van Strattan and top goal scorer Simon Catanzaro, and the return of David Seal to his native shores.

Carlton has captured Scottish international, David McPherson, as well as Craig Deans who together should form a very sound defensive unit. Adelaide City midfielder David Terminello has come across to replace the departed Bresciano while both Rick van Steeden and Marcus Stergiopoulos have moved across the Tasman to join the Auckland Kings.

Canberra have made a couple of captures with the return of Alex Castro from Adelaide Sharks while the signing of South Melbourne veteran Jason Polak, should add experience to a young team.

Newcastle has made a couple of signings with Travis Dodd coming across from Adelaide City while young striker Luke Tomich, from Marconi will add depth to the forward line. Another Marconi player, Vlado Zoric, is also a possibility.

Wollongong has also made some inroads into the transfer market with the probable capture of the Cervinski brothers, David and Adrian. David has been playing in Singapore lately.

Marconi have not made a big splash in the transfer market because it is believed that their new coach (to replace Frank Farina) should be allowed to choose his players. Frank of course is in line for the Socceroo position.

Next week Inside Soccer will have an in depth, club by club, feature of all the confirmed movements of players and any rumours that may be surfacing.



Cosmos signing Jason Polak.

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Oh, and another thing, the great man has signed the book.

So for your signed copy of Frank Farina's book 'MY WORLD IS ROUND, just answer the following question and put the answer on the back of the envelope.

QUESTION:

Which Serie A club did Frank Farina play for?

FARINA



FRANK FARINA

A personal playing history



HAVE YOUR SAY...

To Patrick Smith of The Age newspaper ...

Your article entitled, "Strike three for soccer's bid to encroach" (16/7) did seem to sum up general opinion regarding the sideshow before the actual soccer match that took place on the MCG on Thursday, 16th July 1999.

Yet, as for soccer's future in Australia, it is surely far too soon to predict that it cannot make a bigger impact on the sporting landscape here.

Whilst the national league has experienced far worse crises than many other sports, it still continues to build and rebuild, however slowly.

No amount of suggested internal divisions in the code can kill it off. Not even your own 'words of wisdom' and all of the negative press that mainly stems from Aussie rules-affiliated writers.

In fact, you guys have given it so much attention lately, that it is certainly no wonder Ian Collins of the AFL suggested to the Herald Sun that all you ever hear about is "soccer, soccer, soccer".

It goes without saying that over 65,000 soccer watchers at the MCG would be a significantly larger turnout than what the AFL will draw for each of its forthcoming weekend fixtures. On that alone, Soccer Australia should, and hopefully will,

schedule other high profile football games in Melbourne right in the heart of the AFL season every year. Might as well keep the pressure on, because soccer has an unlimited number of dice rolls left. I predict at least one every four years, or maybe one every two years, depending on what FIFA decides with regards to the World Cup.

It doesn't matter what the AFL does or doesn't do - there are enough soccer fans (and aussie rules haters) in Victoria and the other states to keep soccer 'alive and kicking', to borrow an already heavily borrowed phrase.

The soccer fraternity is in this for the long haul, no matter how long it takes for the game to fully rival 'the other football'.

Oh, by the way, keep up the Aussie rules articles - the sport that still can't rule Australia either.

Mark Fisher, Melbourne

Editor's note:

We'll put Mark. If there are any other examples of biased press, let us know. We are more than happy to expose the duplicitous AFL-affiliated media.

By the way, in this issue we have an interesting article on the results of a Channel 7 Sport's net site discussion about soccer and how it will become the dominant sport in Australia.

SOCCEROOS DROP OUT OF WORLD 50

Despite beating the world all-stars in June, and having one of the strongest line-ups in years (when we can get them together!), Australia's world ranking fell five places to No.61 in the monthly FIFA rankings.

Brazil increased its lead while Uruguay, Mexico and Chile all climbed significantly the reward for their strong performance at the recently completed Copa America.

Uruguay made the biggest jump, using its runner-up finish to climb 32 places to 42nd while third-placed Mexico moved up three to 11th and fourth-placed Chile rose seven spots to 22nd.

Uruguay made it all the way to the championship match of the Copa America before falling 3-0 to Brazil. Along the way it beat Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay and Chile - the latter two on penalties - to soar into the top 50.

Brazil remained atop the rankings for the 61st consecutive month and hiked its lead to more than 70 points over second-placed France, which was followed by the Czech Republic, Italy and Germany.

Argentina, which fell to arch South American rival Brazil 2-1 in the Copa America quarterfinals,

moved up two spots to sixth and was followed by Croatia, Spain, Romania and Norway.

Copa America host Paraguay, which reached the quarters before losing to Uruguay, moved up five places to 16th - historically its highest listing in the FIFA Rankings.

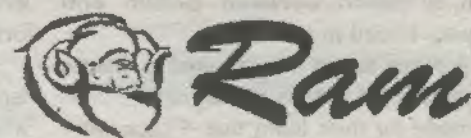
Despite falling to Chile in the quarterfinals, Colombia jumped 14 places to 18th, and Peru climbed 24 spots to 41st despite a quarterfinal loss on penalties to Mexico after a 3-3 draw.

Among those that took the biggest falls in the top 50 since the June rankings were Yugoslavia, down five places to 21st, Russia and Scotland, which fell four places each to 27th and 31st respectively.

The rankings are influenced by the amount of games a country plays. At one point, during the Venables era, we were ranked around the 30 mark.

In other news ... local company Woolmark will be providing the material for 'the greatest side on the planet' Man Utd's kit for the new season.

Wool you ask? We are assured that the champions will not be sweating too much in their new kit.



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UNIROOS DISAPPOINT IN WORLD GAMES

A well kept secret from Australian football fans was the recent World University Games. Australia sent over a team, the Unirooms, to sunny Spain but things did not work out too well for our boys.

Maintaining an Australian football tradition, a lack of pre-tournament preparation worked against the team and it ended up in a disappointing 15th spot (out of 16 teams).

The team, selected from universities and colleges around the country, contained a few names familiar to fans of the Ericsson Cup. The best known was Perth Glory's 98/99 rookie of the year, Jamie Harnwell.

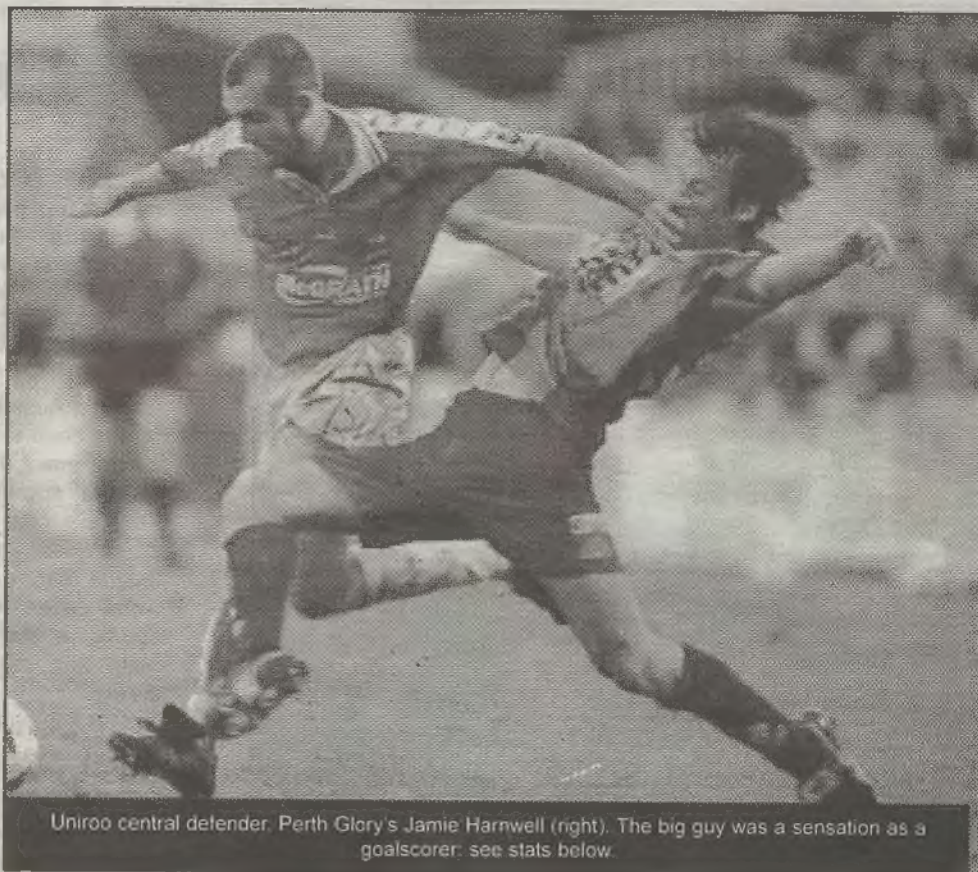
Other names included Andrew Clarke, once of Canberra Cosmos, Glen Kolpak, from Brisbane Strikers, Doug West from Newcastle and Scot Halpin, formerly of Perth Glory.

The goalkeeper, Steve Angelov, is another name that may be recognised from his appearances for the Australian Youth team of a few years ago.

Australia was placed in a tough group with hosts Spain, South American football power, Uruguay and African champions, Morocco.

A 1-0 defeat at the hands of the hosts, Spain, in the first round was a meritorious performance and augured well for the rest of the round robin.

A nil-all draw against Uruguay in the second round wasn't the result that the Unirooms were looking for but, never-



Uniroom central defender, Perth Glory's Jamie Harnwell (right). The big guy was a sensation as a goalscorer: see stats below.

theless, the result kept alive their hopes for progress into the next round. In the last round they had to beat Morocco by three clear goals to advance further.

Jamie Harnwell did his little bit for the team in the last game by scoring a

hat-trick but unfortunately Morocco were able to score six and thus confine the Unirooms to the play-offs for 9th to 16th spot.

The team was beaten by the Ukraine in their first play-off game and in

the next game they suffered a 3-1 loss to Japan thus eliminating them to the play off for the last two spots.

Jamie Harnwell scored another goal to conclude the tournament with four goals. With such a track record Bernd Stange might have to consider him as a striker for the next season.

Luck finally came the way of the Unirooms when their next opponents, South Africa, forfeited. The generosity of the Africans spared Unirooms the ignominy of the wooden spoon.

Overall a disappointing tournament for the Unirooms, though it must be said that the entire competition was played on "MONDO" or artificial surfaces which was a new concept to the boys. Much skin was lost and the injury toll was a major factor in the overall result.

The best players for the Unirooms over the tournament were John Fusco, Doug West, Matthew Percy and of course Jamie Harnwell.

Match details courtesy of Australian goal-keeper Adam Mark who was able to relay information to Internet Oz-soccer chat list member Paul Goodwin.

BIFFO MARS FIERY CUP MATCH

Meanwhile the worst fears of the organisers of the 20th World Student Games were realised in Magaluf when a match between Britain and Uruguay ended in a near riot.

A police escort was required to ensure the safety of the Britons as they left the pitch and made for their team bus. Police were called in at the San Fernando pitch when the Uruguayans conceded a fourth goal in time added on at the end of the game, their frustration boiled over, and several of the South Americans started to kick the British scorer, Mark Coates.

Locals have been wary that the presence of nearly 6,000 student sportsmen and women, staying in the fun in the sun holiday resort during the 10-day Games, might result in rowdy behaviour and drunkenness.

What they had not anticipated was for violence to break out on the field of play.

With all sports except athletics finishing their competition, and with the normally boisterous closing ceremony scheduled, about 200 extra police had been drafted in to Magaluf from the Spanish mainland as reinforcements to avoid clashes at the end of what have been dubbed the Club 18-30 Games.

The incident at the soccer match - to decide ninth and 10th places - happened towards the end of an ill-tempered game in which three players, two of them Uruguayan, had been sent off.

The referee intervened to stop the violence, and quickly drew an end to the game, when the whole of the Uruguayan squad began to attack the British players.

"I've never seen anything like it," said British manager Ian Moir. "I've spoken to the referee, and he is perfectly happy that the British team did nothing to provoke the attacks."

John Warnock, the official from FIFA, the world governing body, overseeing the tournament, was today awaiting the independent match assessor's report.

"There was a fracas at the end of the game. I have a letter of protest from the British team, but I am awaiting for an independent report," Warnock said.

"It is the first time that anything like this has happened with the Uruguayans at the Universiade. The student teams have always been much better behaved than the national team. I am very disappointed."

AUSSIE STATS

Round 1:

Spain 1 (Rivera pen. 49)

Australia 0

Spain: Mallo, Ferron, Gonzalez, Loza, Amieva, Fernandez, Colsa, Lopez, Rivera, Rodriguez (Soriano 74)

Australia: Angelov, West, Fusco (Harnwell T 60), Johns, Clark, McIlroy, Halpin (Caniglia 72), Percz, Harnwell J, Kolpak, Wells.

YC: Kolpak (50), West (84), Caniglia (91) RC: McIlroy (53), Rivera (57) Wells (25), 58)

Referee: Yarmenehuk (UKR)

Crowd: 800

Magaluf Stadium

Round 2:

Australia 0

Uruguay 0

Australia: Angelov, West, Fusco, Harnwell T, Patch (Scott 73), Johns, Clark, Halpin, Kolpak (Caniglia 45), Percy, Harnwell J

Uruguay: Welker, Sosa, Suarez, Garcia (Diaz 71), Boragno, Seracco, Guarino, Gutierrez (Costa 66), Gimenez, Gonzalez, Parrilo (Atiazarian 83)

YC: Kolpak (22), Caniglia (64), Harnwell J (88), Sosa (14), Suarez (35), Diaz (74), Gimenez (84)

RC: McIlroy (53), Rivera (57), Wells (25), 58)

Referee: Messina (ITA)

Crowd: 300

San Fernando Stadium

Round 3:

Australia 3 (J Harnwell 24, 37, 81)

Morocco 6 (11, 45, 55, 79, 92, 93)

Australia: Appeldorn, West, Fusco, Scott, Johns, Clark (Harnwell T 47), Halpin, Wells (Patch 75), Percy, Harnwell J, McIlroy
Morocco: Issalmene, Haddad, Haimama (Labdaoui 43), Chippo, Fellah, Laetris (Kora 72), Dakech (Lakhoul 58), M-Rabeh, Zinbi, Gila, Loksaury

YC: Laetris (19), Chippo (63), Gila (67), McIlroy (19), Clark (49), Percy (82) RC: Percy (87), West (87)

Referee: Viera (URU)

Crowd: 200

Santa Ponsa

6/7/99 17:00

Australia 1 (T Harnwell 80)

Japan 3 (M Kakimoto 2, M Miyazawa 19, T Kurobe 36)

Australia: Appeldorn, West, Fusco (Patch 45), Scott (Kose 80), Clark (Caniglia 30), Wells, Percy, Harnwell J, Harnwell T, McIlroy, Kolpak

Japan: Yamagishi, Sakoi, Taniike, Isurumi, Miyazawa, Kimori, Kurobe, Ishikawa, Kagayama, Saeki, Kakimoto

YC: Kurobe (15), Fusco (15), Harnwell J (36), Wells (62), Harnwell T (63), Tsunimi (89)

RC: Sakoi (42 & 81)

Referee: Hadga (MAR)

Crowd: 200

Magaluf

I HAD A PREMONITION, SAYS STAR'S MUM

By Aidan Ormond

Ines Colosimo is not a psychic. Nor is she paranoid. She is in fact a successful fashion designer with Melbourne clothing outlet Croce-Colosimo. But when her son, Socceroo Simon Colosimo, left Melbourne after game one of the recent Manchester United tour, she said she had a feeling she could not explain. A very bad feeling.

"I just knew my son would get hurt in Sydney," she said last night from Melbourne. "On the Thursday I watched him play Manchester United at the MCG and I thought he played quite well. I was pleased, not that I know too much about soccer, mind you."

It was from this point on that her nightmare began to unfold. "It was 8pm on the Saturday night. My sister-in-law came over and I told her I felt edgy, I felt an anger and stress I have never felt before and I didn't know why. So I rang Simon in Sydney."

"Anyway on the Sunday I went to see my daughter and my other son play. After that I was driving home at about 4pm and honestly Aidan, I couldn't breathe," she explained. "I knew something was very wrong but I said to myself 'you're being stupid'. So we arrived home and I put on the TV and there was a replay of what happened and I thought 'Oh my God'."

"My kids always tell me that I don't know much about the game, but when I saw the tackle on Simon I knew it was wrong, he was not going for the ball. You could see it a mile away that he (Cole)

was going for his leg.

"My other son Adrian said I was overdratnising it, but when he too saw the replay he said, 'Mum, for once you're right'."

As her son went in for his operation last weekend, Ines Colosimo was left wondering why. "I could understand if it was a World Cup game where there was a lot riding on the result, but this was an exhibition game, wasn't it? Did he feel threatened by this 19-year-old Socceroo? Weren't Manchester winning at the time?"

As for her son's future, she is adamant that he will bounce back stronger than ever; his strong will and determination being a key feature of his personality.

As for Andy Cole and Ines Colosimo found it hard to explain what she would say to him face-to-face. But she would like to know why someone who has been successful, and has made money would want to "tear someone else down ... Andy Cole is supposed to be a professional."

No doubt Andy Cole would say that injuries are all part and parcel of being a professional, but that's 'Cole Comfort' for the Colosimo family right now.

"Legal action is currently being explored by Colosimo's club Carlton, based on compensation. The player was due to leave for overseas trials prior to the tour and was also wanted by Bayern Munich."



Flying start ... Australia's Simon Colosimo gets the better of Man Utd's Jonathon Greening at the MCG in game one

COLOSIMO TO BECOME CARLTON AMBASSADOR

Carlton has moved swiftly to ease Simon Colosimo's pain by appointing him club 'ambassador'.

General Manager Lou Sticca explained in a media statement: 'Simon is a role model for many thousands of children in our feeder club system, as well as being a thoroughly charming young man. Although he's going to be laid up for a while, we know that players return from injury quicker and more fully recovered if they have a positive mindset during the healing process.'

'Accordingly, as soon as he's well enough to do so, we're going to use Simon as a roving ambassador for the Club, visiting schools, feeder clubs and associations, to spread the word about what Carlton is trying to achieve in the soccer world, and to help him serve as an on-going inspiration to the next generation of players. We don't want him moping around waiting for the injury to heal.'

'The whole situation would just pray on a young man's mind, particularly when his colleagues start getting onto the pitch and playing NSL soccer again,

and especially as it will be some time before we can determine whether his career has been brutally cut short by this incident.'

'It'd be far better for him to keep busy and keep involved in the

happens, the family is tested. We won't be found wanting. We're going to back this young man all the way.'

Sticca added that Colosimo's appointment to the role coincided with



Carlton and Australian international footballer Simon Colosimo reads one of the many notes of support.

game and we're going to make sure that is the outcome. We are a family here at Carlton, and when something like this

Carlton's launch of their 1999-2000 marketing campaign, which is designed to substantially boost Club membership and game attendance.

"Simon will now play an integral role in our marketing push. In conjunction with our move to Olympic Park, our new coach and new signings, and our new Nike strip, we're releasing new promotional materials to all our members, and we're seeking to double paid up memberships before the season kicks off in October."

"We have a fantastic resource unrivalled anywhere in the NSL with our feeder Club system, with over 20,000 children and youths playing in Carlton-associated clubs in Melbourne and throughout Australia."

"We will be targeting those people between now and the first game to make sure they are aware of the many benefits associated with Carlton Soccer Club membership, and to ensure that we start the season with a bang!" ended Sticca.

Inside Soccer fully supports our NSL clubs in Melbourne, and hopes that fans can turn out in droves like they do at Spirit and Glory.

This scenario is exactly what AFL-affiliated elements of the Melbourne media fear most. So get out and support your Melbourne teams this year!

HEAVEN AND HELL FOR SALLY!

By Aidan Ormond

Sally Orpin has had a roller-coaster ride of emotions lately. Football is her passion, you see. She is a mad-keen fan of both Manchester United and Carlton, so much so that she runs the Melbourne Red Devils' supporters club. She is also the editor and inspiration behind Carlton's excellent fanzine *My Blue Heaven*.

So when worlds collide, like they did with the Simon Colosimo/Andy Cole incident, she was, to put it mildly, somewhat disturbed.

"People have been giving me shit on the phone all week," she says in her English accent. Talk about mixed emotions. But more on the Man U (or is that Man Ure?) tour later.

The fanzine that she runs has made its way to Inside Soccer's offices, and it impressed our fanzine-starved staff. Similar to Spirit's *Three points and a hangover*, it pulls no punches. Sally takes up the story.

"It started in December last year. It came about because I am English and I am a footie fan. I love the fanzine culture, so when I started supporting Carlton I thought it would be a good idea. So a guy called Richard and I started it. It's just basically because we love the team, that's why we spent our own money doing it. There have been three issues last season," she explains. "It takes heaps of work. We have contributors, it takes a few weeks to get it ready, but it's good fun."

"Next season there will be four issues, that is every two months, with the difference that we will charge for it

because we are spending our own money on this. It will be available outside the ground and at certain retailers. The club has been very supportive of the fanzine, and are appreciative of the fact that we do it."

And, as a true football supporter, she felt it was poor form that some fans deserted Carlton when they started losing last season. "Last year was very disappointing," she reflects. "Sadly some supporters fell away, which you should not do. You stick with your team through thick and thin."

"I think the name Carlton, however, does put people off," she states. "The tribal nature of AFL is such that we will never attract supporters who have affiliations with other AFL clubs. For instance, if you supported Arsenal, you wouldn't support a rugby team called Spurs, would you? I do think it holds things back."

The future? "The potential is there for Carlton. We feel that the hard-core supporters have invested so much emotion into the club, that we bloody well want to make it a success!"

As for the difference between Carlton and the champions South Melbourne and she is quite clear. "I think there is a huge difference between us and South Melbourne. 99% of South fans are Greek, and they are so passionate about their heritage that they don't encourage others to join in."

"From my point of view I have always wanted a football team to support since I came here. But, when I went to South Melbourne, the atmosphere was quite horrible. We weren't welcomed or encouraged, and I know a lot of people who have had the same problem. They take their club for granted."



Simon Colosimo being stretchered off Stadium Australia. Jacob Burns looks on.

Carlton is a multi-cultural club."

Back to the Man Utd game and she was in her element. "From a fans view it was brilliant just to see them. Most supporters met up together and we saw the players at the Casino."

"Unfortunately the atmosphere had disintegrated once we got to the MCG, it was like 'pissing in the wind' trying to get some atmosphere. Still, we enjoyed ourselves and surrounded the Man Utd bus and sang songs to the bus after and partied at the Casino."

And the game itself? "The players were scared to get hurt. The MCG was like a ploughed field with a cricket pitch in the middle. The Australians played very well. Colosimo showed he was world class."

As for the notion that some fans

are just bandwagon jumpers, she evoked a boxing colloquialism: "Some are just talking the talk and not walking the walk".

She felt, watching her heroes, that they may have underestimated some of the Aussies. "Cole did not believe that Colosimo was that good. Both have been injured, one's reputation and one's leg."

"Carlton fans are right behind Simon and wish him all the very best. One of my players did it, which is making it difficult for me. People have been looking at this tackle, but you can't judge things. It happened in a split second."

WE'LL BE WATCHING YOU

An interesting little battle of opinions has been going on lately courtesy of channel seven's sports website (www.sport.seven.com.au). This was the lead-in question:

"Soccer has traditionally taken a back seat in Australia to the likes of Aussie Rules, League and Union. Yet when triple champions Manchester Utd graced our shores the crowds flocked to watch them play, and many Australians are playing in Europe at a top-class level. How will soccer become a dominant sport in Australia?"

Needless to say a good number of fans had their say, with the overwhelming majority favouring soccer. You may recall that some months ago, this site ran a poll to find out what was the most popular form of football, with 'the real football' winning out with 37% of the vote, ahead of Rugby League, AFL and Union.

Here is what some of the respondents said:

"In response to AFL Fan of Melbourne (97), I don't think you know what you are talking about. I like AFL myself but SOCCER is the TRUE FOOTBALL in the world. Why is soccer called FOOTBALL in the Olympics. And why does soccer have a world cup. The simple reason Every country in the WORLD PLAYS SOCCER ..."

"Well, we can start by having the channel that purchased NSL rights actually showing the game...at a decent time. Within 3 years football will surpass League in Sydney as the No.1 sport in terms of popularity. Union is no contest - absolutely limited appeal; AFL - has no growth potential."

"Does Channel seven get paid 'backhanders' by the AFL, (especially from the 'Eagles nest') to give them

more exposure and less to soccer? Even if one of the Eagles players goes for a "shit" it makes the news!

"The major problems affecting the popularity of FOOTBALL in Australia are:

1. The media (Channels 7, 9, 10 and Newspaper) tends to be biased against Soccer. They should see that soccer is very popular amongst children between 7 to 13 year old (boys and girls) and promote the code.

2. People with money in Australia who believe that soccer is a threat ...

"There's room enough for all codes of football in Australia. As a soccer supporter all I want from the media is an equal slice of the cake. And living in Perth, I would like to see the state government assisting Perth Glory immediately with the building of a purpose built stadium complete with flood-lighting ..."

"Firstly I would like to say how fanatic it was when seven showed the Manchester United game on the Thursday night. But what happened to the Sunday night? You would of got more ratings if you showed them but hey your arrogant and believe there is no place for soccer in this country."

Naturally there were some responses bagging soccer, but they were in the minority. If it is still on the site, make your views known.

Well-done to all the real football fans for having their say with the Channel that owns the rights to Australian soccer, keep up the pressure and, in the words of Public Enemy, 'don't believe the hype'.

SENSATIONAL WWC 99

Australia has just finished competing in a football tournament that broke all records for attendances, media interest and corporate backing. The 1999 Women's World Cup was a phenomenal success. One Aussie who saw the whole tournament was Janene Mar, the Australian Women's Soccer Association's Communications Manager. Last night she spoke with Aidan Ormond about the Cup, TV coverage in Australia the Matildas' involvement and the possibility of a World Cup being held here ...

Janene, thanks for your time, can you describe the media coverage in the US for the WWC.

The 1999 Women's World Cup was truly a media sensation throughout the USA during the three weeks of the event.

It was impossible to remain untouched by the World Cup and its coverage. Even the most adamant non-sports-followers could not escape the phenomenon that was this women's sporting event and this most inspiring women's soccer team. Front page profile stories and photos were splashed across every major (and smaller) newspaper throughout the nation, followed by extensive coverage inside, often taking up at least half the entire sports section. Radio news and interviews each day. Full television coverage of all 32 matches of the World Cup on

vering and tireless contribution to the media success of the World Cup, aside from their winning performances on the field. Training sessions were not your regular practice run out on the pitch, but were followed by lengthy interview and photo sessions with all manner of journalists from throughout the US and the world.

It was not uncommon (and demands grew heavier as the Americans advanced closer to the final) after each exhausting World Cup match for the commitments to last another 90 minutes in the 'mixed zone' media interview area, some not even given a chance to change or shower before they had to race onto the team bus. But all performed with such dedication and professionalism - all part of their duties as an athlete.

Do you think the success of the WWC will impact the women's game here, and why?

The success of the World Cup can only but help the continuing growth and success of women's football in Australia. What happened in the USA proved that women's soccer and women's sport in general is entertaining to watch and of an exciting quality, and can command large numbers of paying spectators. Elite women's footballers can provide vital role models for young boys and girls alike, and earn the respect of adults for their athleticism and professionalism.

Tragically the impact on the game here has been severely hamstrung because the World Cup was not televised in Australia. TV is the most powerful of mediums, and to deny Australians the opportunity to witness this amazing event is a travesty. Missed was the opportunity, like in America, to not only inspire existing young female players, but to reach new audiences and gain the respect of the general public and the media for our sport which is crying out for mainstream acceptance.

This was an event which had to be experienced visually on the television screen. To witness the skills of the world's finest technicians, the passion, the colour, the packed stadiums. The greatest ever women's sporting event has come and gone, but most people in Australia will never know. It is hard to convey the success that it was to people who have not seen it for themselves. The Olympic Games are a year away, and Australia looks set to be granted the right to host the 2003 Women's World Cup. We'll still have to work extra hard to get the message through to the public and prospective sponsors that women's soccer is a worthwhile product.

Overall, has the standard of the Women's game improved since the last World Cup?

Without having actually seen the last World Cup myself, I would still say that women's soccer has improved a lot over

the last four years. All of the top nations have lifted another notch or two and today are certainly fitter, technically and tactically more aware, and more professional overall.

The USA and China are today a level above the rest of the pack and displayed an exciting brand of attacking football. Their speed and athleticism added to their exceptional skills and ease on the ball.

It was most encouraging to watch Nigeria win through to earn a place at the Olympic Games, the first time an African nation has advanced to the quarterfinals.

On the other hand, although they still finished in the top four, it is appearing more evident that Norway's traditional long ball game is falling behind in its effectiveness. No more was this illustrated than with China's 5-0 thumping of the reigning World Champions in the semifinal.

The increase of the field to 16 nations from the previous 12 proved successful in that probably only Mexico were a little outclassed, although they were in the toughest of groups.

What positives came out of the WWC for the Matildas?

On the face of such a big disappointment, it is hard to find too many positive aspects to the Matildas' World Cup campaign. Everything appeared rosy with top level preparation for the team, and expectations were high, but the results were not forthcoming.

It is true that Australia performed below par, but let us not forget that this was the World Cup finals, and Australia was up against two very highly rated teams in China and Sweden.

It was fantastic for our players to be exposed to that level of football and to soak in the whole atmosphere of such an incredible event. To play in front of appreciative crowds, and be supported by local American fans, many of whom had their faces painted in Australia's colours. To attract media interest and experience playing in top level stadiums. The younger players especially will benefit greatly for the future.

On the park, pleasing individual performances were displayed by evergreen captain Julie Murray, who made an impression with many overseas supporters and journalists. Young defender Dianne Alagich, who had forced her way into the World Cup Team from outside the national squad, proved to be a most consistent and reliable player, unfazed by the whole occasion despite these being her first games for Australia since 1996 before her knee reconstruction. Alagich was a starter in all three matches. The two keepers Belinda Kitching and Tracey Wheeler also performed outstandingly throughout.

There is no time to dwell on this World Cup except to ensure we analyse what the problems were and learn from those mistakes. This whole disappointing experience can be turned into a positive if



Australia's Joanne Peters playing against Ghana in the first group game

we look within and commit ourselves to sorting out the problems and working hard on what is required. We have thirteen months to work on improving our game before the Olympics, time which must be used very wisely and to the fullest.

For you, what was the best memory of the tournament?

The memory of that 90,185 crowd at the Rose Bowl final will live with me forever. Who would have believed that we would ever see the day when women's football would sell-out a stadium of that capacity? The place was abuzz, heaving with anticipation and excitement, alive with painted faces young and old, flags and banners, drums and tambourines, all in party mood. They had come to see their heroes, the thrill of the contest, the skill on the ball, the hard tackles, the tension, the never-say-die commitment. No one went home disappointed.

The explosion of interest amongst ordinary folk and the passion that this event engendered across the board was extraordinary and something for us all to build on.

Also inspiring was the dream first held by the organising committee and brought to realisation - beyond all expectations. Led by two amazing women, Chair Donna de Varona and President/CEO Marla Messing, the World Cup committee felt they could bring in the crowds and make this a breakthrough event for all women's sport. They battled to sell that dream to other bodies and prospective sponsors and had to borrow large sums of money. They were finally successful in convincing the powers that be that top level stadiums should host the matches. These people took a huge gamble, but eventually succeeded with unbelievable results, proving it was possible to sell women's sport.

They already had the product with the USA being the number one team in the world - 1991 World Cup winners and 1996 Olympic champions. Now finally, the whole of America knows it.



either ABC, ESPN or ESPN2.

The most clever and humorous television ads that everyone looked forward to seeing as much as the matches themselves.

The biggest media success was that women's soccer was suddenly being heavily covered in the mainstream media. It wasn't just the soccer journalists and sports shows talking about this World Cup. Even the most hard-nosed journalists and reporters found themselves sucked up in the frenzy caused by these female athletes and started writing about it.

What this saturation coverage meant was that women's soccer attracted an entire new audience, male and female, of all ages and backgrounds. Women's soccer was now on everyone's lips and the ordinary man in the street started following the team's progress. They all knew the names Mia Hamm and Michelle Akers and wanted to see just how good these players were. They followed up by buying tickets and going to watch the games for themselves. They were hooked.

At last, female athletes (outside tennis and gymnastics) had become heroes of a nation. Women respected for their sporting ability, professionalism, athleticism, success on the field in what is not exactly a dainty sport. Added to their vibrant personalities, speaking abilities, and good looks, these athletes were the complete package. And people everyone could relate to and look up to.

The US Team made such an unwa-

NEW PLAYERS IMPRESS

By Sally Orpin

Never mind the score, Carlton had a useful hitout on the weekend, at local Premier League club Bentleigh Greens. Although beaten 4-2 some of the new Carlton signings showed their class.

Young Soccerroo David Terminello nabbed a brilliant goal and generally looked very useful, while Scottish international Davie McPherson showed why he has played 27 times for Scotland.

Playing a 3-5-2 formation the side was clearly rusty but showed plenty of promise. One downside however was Andrew Marth's missed penalty after Brazilian Moreira was brought down.

Another encouraging performance came from young Steve Martin.

Of the injured players, Archie Thompson (pictured above) is on the mend as is new signing from Glory Craig Deans.

An interesting sight was former player John Markovski watching from the sidelines.



And another former player, Andy Vlahos, has been dropped by his Greek club Panathinaikos. He is now looking for another club over there.

Bentleigh looked useful, with a very handy striker.

CARLTON STARTING LINE-UP*

Anastasiadis, Marth, Lapsansky, Anthopoulos, Tricarico, Della Roca, Martin, Moreira, McPherson, Terminello

Subs used: Grbac, H. Anastasiadis, Ouliaris, Sterjevski, Parker, Cagalj

*ten players listed, the eleventh player was a triallist from Altona Magic.

*Sally Orpin appears courtesy of Carlton fanzine *My Blue Heaven*.

PERINICH SCORES ON SPIRIT 'DEBUT'!

That's a headline you haven't seen before! Long-term injured striker Tony Perinich scored on his 'debut' for Spirit in a charity friendly in the Southern Highlands last weekend.

Spirit ended up winning 8-0 against the Southern Highlands, but the score was irrelevant. It was a chance to raise money for children with cancer and for a Spirit to ease their way back into pre-season training.

The first half was predominantly for

the younger Spirit players, such as Adam Griffiths, Simon Catanzaro and Jack Sobczyk, with the more experienced players in the second half also getting a run.

Perinich said later that it was a relief to get back on the pitch. "My knee felt good. It's been a while. I felt good scoring a goal in my comeback. It's a big story isn't it!"

Goals for Spirit came from Watkins (2), Fariah (2), Perinich, Catanzaro, Cunico, Wearne.

NEXT GENERATION OF MATILDAS

The next generation of Matildas has been named for the prestigious Nordic Cup U/21 tournament to be played in Iceland between 2-8 August.

There are two groups of four, with Australia in group one with Iceland, Sweden and Norway. Group two sees the powerful USA paired with Germany, Denmark and Finland.

Australia will play a friendly this Friday in Iceland against their senior national team. The squad left this morning for Reykjavik.

With eight U/21 players in the Matildas' squad for the USA World Cup deemed ineligible, it is an inexperienced squad going to Iceland.



This is the first time Australia has been invited to compete in this tournament, widely considered the unofficial world youth tournament.

In the squad is keeper Joanne Butland, who just missed out on Matilda World Cup selection as well as promising Louisa Bisby and South Australian Natalie Thomas.

The full 17-player squad is:

Alley, Bisby, Bond, Butland, Carney, Cavanagh, Channing, Halfpenny, Kell, Leake, McGovern, McShea, Morris, Ruotolo, Revell, Small, Thomas.

THE FUTURE FOR FANS?

Ever wondered what it would be like to be a football fan in the new millennium? Just think of the differences in the last twenty years and it certainly is a lively discussion topic for fans and administrators alike as we head into the next century.

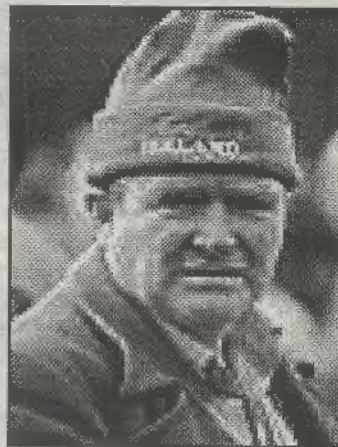
Could the fans of the sixties, with their wooden rattles, rosettes and local club loyalties have imagined the globalised nature of the modern fan? Inside Soccer's Craig Wilson recently attended 'Teams and Fans' 1999, a four-day conference in Maroochydore, funded by the Australian research council and focusing on all football codes.

The premise of the conference was the relationship between teams and fans, and where each is heading.

Attending were academics from around the world from areas such as history, sociology and economics.

One of the main issues that came out of the conference was the plight of the

amount of cities in comparison with the amount of clubs, mergers and relocations (North Sydney League side is a local example) is also becoming an issue, with fans



having to move or change their club allegiances.

Globalisation of sports clubs was also discussed. An obvious example here would be the World Club Championship early in 2000. How big will something like this be in another twenty years?

Another aspect of this globalisation is the profile of clubs' merchandise. With the whiff of business firmly in the air of the recent Man Utd tour of Australia and China, it was posited that some clubs make more money from merchandising ventures than through traditional money-making areas, such as gate receipts.

You'd recall that Man Utd will open franchised cafes in Asia over the next few years and looked at China as being a potentially lucrative market for replica shirts, T-shirts and a myriad of merchandising that is selling not just a brand name, but almost a lifestyle.

This is something that American football clubs have also been exploring. With a declining domestic market, countries around the world, such as Philippines, have been targeted as areas for TV games to be beamed in with the sole reason of selling the 'lifestyle', i.e. the merchandising.

The future of the game globally and in Australia in the next fifty years should be fascinating. Imagine kids all over Asia wearing Spirit and Glory shirts, eating at their favourite Aussie clubs' cafes and wishing they could be Hendo? Or Australian clubs competing annually in a TV-driven World Club Championship?

The Global Game has an exciting and interesting future, but how will lower-income fans fit in?



humble fan from the lower income strata of society. Is he/she being squeezed out of an increasingly corporatised and globalised purview of football?

Wilson noted that in Australia fans of all codes are relatively lucky. Prices for the Ericsson Cup, Rugby League, Union and AFL are still quite affordable in comparison to, say, the English Premier League.

In fact the British government have moved to stop sky-rocketing prices of marquee sporting events by declaring Cup Finals of all codes quasi-national treasures, thus keeping a control of prices and maintaining them within range of the ordinary fan.

Another issue raised was that of mergers. As we are seeing with Rugby League, to survive mergers are becoming an increasingly attractive option. In the US, with the

CANBERRA GETS JOEYS, SHARKS GET REPRIEVE

Canberra will host a rare international soccer match next month when the Joeys take on Bahrain in one of the final qualifying matches for the FIFA World Youth Championship.

The Joeys, the national under-17 team, will play the home leg of their final two-match tie at Bruce Stadium on August 14, with the winner taking the last of the 16 places for the championship in New Zealand in November.

The match was originally scheduled for the Australian Institute of Sport on May 23 but was controversially postponed three days before when Bahrain complained of time clashes with other events.

A number of overseas-based players will return for the game which will also be used as a test run for next year's Olympics qualifiers at Bruce.

Soccer Canberra chief executive officer Robert Bennett compared it to the Australia-Iran World Cup qualifier played in Melbourne 18 months ago.

"It's the final stage before going to the World Cup," he told reporters.

"It's under-17s but the under-17s is one of the jewels in FIFA's crown."

"They put quite a lot of pride and privilege in the tournament and it has a considerable profile all around the world."

A frosty Canberra night should help the Australians against the Middle Eastern team, which knocked both Korea and Japan out of the Asian qualifying stages.

Soccer Australia is not expecting any criticism of the near-perfect Bruce Stadium surface, following complaints about the pitch at the MCG following last week's Manchester United games.

The national body is looking at bringing more international matches to Canberra in the buildup to the Olympics.

"It's a good opportunity for the Olympics team down here to see

how a fully-fledged international match works," Soccer Australia spokesman Jason Crowle said.

"This match is under full FIFA jurisdiction so all the rules apply."

"I think it's a good opportunity to see how the public will regard the match and we're looking for their full support considering it's a major qualifier for one of our national teams."

A \$425,000 package to save national league club Adelaide Sharks from liquidation will be put to creditors on August 3.

Creditors, including players and the Australian Taxation Office, will be asked to either accept the rescue bid or wind up the club.

The rescue bid is being made by a group of six Greek businessmen and involves the \$425,000 being paid over six months, most of it within the first 14 days.

Former Sharks chairman Con Makris, who looked set to save the club last week when he pitched in some extra money for the bid, has since withdrawn from the deal.

South Australian Supreme Court Justice Brian Martin, who has been considering the legal complexities of the club's arrangement over the past two weeks, adjourned the case until August 9.

"I am generally satisfied with what has been put up and the progress that has been made so

I would simply allow this to go ahead to a meeting of creditors," he said.

Whatever happens, the Sharks would be well advised to embrace change and not remain some bastion of the Greek community of Adelaide. If they need a good example, they should look at what Adelaide City are trying to do, otherwise they will miss the bus.

MARKETING RIGHTS CAUSING NSL ANGST

Rene Rivkin's million plus deal for Ericsson Cup marketing is ruffling a few feathers within the ranks of the NSL chairmen.

League club officials believe the three-year deal is being negotiated secretly without proper consultation with the 17 clubs.

At least three club chiefs have formally objected to the deal and expressed concern to Soccer Australia chairman Basil Scarsella and board member and Ericsson Cup chairman Tony Labbozzetta.

Canberra Cosmos chairman Ian Knop said the heads of agreement signed between Soccer Australia and the Rivkin Group, promoters of the Manchester United tour, was bad business.

"Rene Rivkin is not the only corporate entity wanting to buy interests in Soccer Australia," Knop said.

The clubs' major fear is a return to previous deals, which were perceived to have been done without club consultation, and being detrimental to the game.

Perth Glory chairman Nick Tana and Carlton chief executive Lou Sticca both agreed that the rights of the national league should not be sold to a private concern to make profits at the expense of clubs.

"It takes away a major asset the national league clubs have got and gives it to a private entrepreneur to profit from it," Tana said.

"I don't believe the league should be owned by one individual or one group. The rights of the league should be owned by the league."

Sticca said: "We welcome Rivkin's involvement, but we are concerned with the way the matter has been dealt with."

"We would prefer a group representing the clubs to negotiate the best possible position."

The proposal being discussed between Rivkin and Labbozzetta would allow the owner of the marketing rights to control every aspect of the domestic



Soccer Australia Chairman Basil Scarsella

competition, including advertising signs, catering rights, major sponsorship and corporate interests and sponsor logos on player uniforms.

Labbozzetta insisted no deal had been signed and said clubs and the Soccer Australia board would have to approve any final agreement.

"The clubs are playing a leading role in the Ericsson Cup," a defensive Labbozzetta said.

"I have always been an advocate that all clubs are informed. The executive is being recognised."

Soccer Australia chief executive David Woolley said the peak body would meet with representatives from Rivkin Entertainment, sports management giant IMG and the Australian Soccer Players Association to draw up a strategy on how best to attract three or four major international matches each year to Australia.

Soccer Australia reportedly earned more than \$1 million from the recent FIFA World Stars match in Sydney and the two Manchester United matches.

Of course the main concern for all serious games in Australia is getting overseas-based Australians to be released from their powerful clubs

BRUSASCO BLASTS SOCCER AUSTRALIA'S OLD GUARD

Outgoing Brisbane Strikers chairman Ian Brusasco saved some parting shots for Soccer Australia officials and former premiership coach Frank Farina today when he announced his retirement from soccer administration after 42 years.

Brusasco also made a plea for the government and sponsors to throw more financial support at the sport to help cover for the bounty lost when Australia failed to qualify for last year's World Cup finals in France.

Brusasco said he lost enthusiasm for his roles as chairman of the Strikers, the club's Trustee Management Group and as a trustee of the Queensland Soccer Federation when Farina left the club last year.

"My heart was never in it after what happened with the Frank Farina incident. Him walking in and saying to me 'I'm leaving, I'm going to Marconi', not even that I'm thinking of leaving," Brusasco said.

"We helped convince Frank to become a coach when he wanted to continue playing and we guided him in his career and helped him in his comeback to Australia."

"That hurt me very deeply ... and I'll never get close to a player again."

Brusasco will stay on as chairman of the Olympic Football Taskforce ahead of next year's Games in Sydney but said he was not the only soccer official who should be stepping down.

"(The direction in which) Soccer Australia is going worries me having

been an ex-chairman," he said.

"There are some people in Soccer Australia who would be better off stepping down and doing what I'm doing today."

"They may benefit soccer more by doing that and that's at plenty of levels. Anyone who's been watching and knows what's happening would realise it needs a shake-up."

During an emotional media conference, Brusasco rated the Strikers' 1996/97 National Soccer League title as one of his greatest thrills in the sport when a capacity crowd of more than 40,000 filled Lang Park for the final.

The Strikers have struggled since that day and Brusasco acknowledged the win caused some problems for the club.

"It was one of the great days of my life but when I reflect on it I don't think we were ready to win a championship," he said.

"You shouldn't be able to get 40,000 people at a game; close the gates and lock people out and the next year not be able to capitalise on it."

"A lot of the players weren't ready in that the following year they didn't perform to their capabilities. Nobody did whether it be the administrators or the players."

The Strikers board will meet to choose a new chairman as the team faces a tough task to turn around their performances from last season when the new season begins in October.

NSW SUPER LEAGUE

PARRAMATTA WIN THRILLER TO GO THROUGH TO GRAND FINAL

The Parramatta Eagles will play the Blacktown City Demons in the 1999 Super League Grand Final on Sunday 1 August at Marconi Stadium, after defeating the Bonnyrigg White Eagles 3-2 in extra time at the Gabbie Stadium.

In an amazing game Parramatta took the lead on 24 minutes when Ballamobou Cõnde drove the ball home from the edge of the penalty area. That lead lasted just thirteen minutes, though, when Ray Younis collected a Bobby Dragas header from a corner and blasted home.

In the first half Bonnyrigg lost both Javier Mancino and James Warburton with injuries, and another injury to goalkeeper Miladen Kos saw them use all three substitutes in the first 50 minutes.

Mark Racker put a delightful ball over for Ben Green to bullet a header home to make it 2-1 for the White Eagles on 72 minutes, but then Racker was carried off on a stretcher with what looked a serious ankle injury.

The ten men held on until two minutes before the end, when Grant Bard nipped in front of substitute goalkeeper Sasha Bozic and made it 2-2. Even worse for Bonnyrigg was that Bobby Dragas was then sent off right on the stroke of full-time, leaving his team to play the game out with nine men.

Those nine men held on in the first period of extra time, but finally, in the 110th minute of the game, Bard scored his second and his side's third, to finish the game on the 'Golden Goals' rule.

In the Under 21's Macarthur Rams will play the Bonnyrigg White Eagles, who came through an amazing game with Parramatta in a 7-4 victory.

It was much closer in the under 18's, Macarthur edging out Blacktown on penalties to face Parramatta Eagles in next Sunday's Grand Final with a 10:30am start.

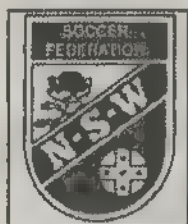
The NSW Super League Grand Final promises to be a day to be enjoyed by everyone. As well as action in three great games on the park, there will be plenty of fun for the family off the park too.

The kids can enjoy free face painting, clowns and balloon sculptures, and there's a chance to win a Sony Playstation, autographed Soccerroo shirt, or dinner for two at Vieri's by entering the Penalty Kick Competition at half-time in the main game.

Gates open at 9.30am for a 10.30am kick-off in the 18s between Parramatta and Macarthur while in the under 21s Macarthur puts in another appearance at 12.30pm.

And then in the big game, the two powerhouse teams of the State League, Blacktown and Parramatta, battle it out in first grade. With Parramatta now having a toe-hold in the NSL through their 'cousin' team, Parramatta Power, Blacktown will be keen to assert their superiority. Minor premiers Bonnyrigg lost out on making it to the final when they went down to Parramatta 3-2 after extra time in Sunday's preliminary final.

Entry to the Super League Grand Final is only \$8 for adults, \$5 for concession and \$2 for children for all three games!



**NSW SOCCER
FEDERATION
SUPER LEAGUE**

GRAND FINAL

SUNDAY AUGUST 1

First Grade: Blacktown Demons v Parramatta Eagles
Marconi Stadium 3.00 pm

Under 21s: Macarthur Rams v Bonnyrigg White Eagles
Marconi Stadium 12.30 pm

Under 18s: Parramatta Eagles v Macarthur Rams
Marconi Stadium 10.30 am

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SUPER LEAGUE: Preliminary Finals:

First Grade:

Parramatta Eagles 3 (B Conde 24m G Bard 88/110m)

Bonnyrigg White Eagles 2 (R Younis 37m, B Green 72m) (extra time).

U/21:

Bonnyrigg White Eagles 7

Parramatta Eagles 4.

U-18:

Macarthur Rams 1

Blacktown City 1 (Macarthur Rams 4 bt Blacktown City 3 on Penalties).

DIVISION ONE:

First Grade

Illawarra Lions 1 (V Tasevski 88m) bt St George 0, Manly Warringah 2 (A Hunter 68m D Harding 80m) bt Stanmore Hawks 1 (E Briscoe 58m), Bathurst '75 5 (M Rooke 5/36m, B Gallard 64m, A Collins 87m, G Wallace 89m) bt Rockdale City 3 (P Apolevski 43m, S Najdoski 59/84),

Illawarra Lions 2 (A Krstevski 10m, V Tasevski 27m) bt Auburn United 1 (H Bayhan 49m),

Dulwich Hill 2 (I De Jesus 49m, M Sultan 63m) bt Rockdale City 1 (S Najdoski 6m),

Moorebank Sports 2 (A Maiorca 80m, J Corrente 82m) bt Hurstville City 0, Bathurst '75 1 (T

Clancy 90m) bt Penrith Panthers 1 (R Casserly 15m Pen), Manly Warringah 1 (K Foster 32m) drew St George 1 (S Janic 16m).

U/21:

Stanmore Hawks 2 drew Bathurst '75 2, Dulwich Hill 2 bt Auburn United 1, St George 2 drew

AC United 2, Manly Warringah 4 bt Stanmore Hawks 1, Auburn United 3 bt Illawarra Lions 0,

Rockdale City 9 bt Dulwich Hill 0, Moorebank Sports 1 bt Hurstville City 0, Penrith Panthers 2

bt Bathurst '75 0, Manly Warringah 1 bt St George 0.

U/18:

Stanmore Hawks 2 bt Bathurst '75 0, Dulwich Hill 2 bt Auburn United 1, AC United 4 bt St

George 0, Stanmore Hawks 1 bt Manly Warringah 0, Illawarra Lions 3 bt Auburn United 2,

Rockdale City 3 bt Dulwich Hill 1, Moorebank Sports 4 bt Hurstville City 0, Bathurst '75 2 bt

Penrith Panthers 1, Manly Warringah 2 bt St George 1.

DIVISION TWO:

First Grade:

Mt Pritchard 2 bt Greystanes 0, Arncliffe Scots 1 bt Hurstville ZSC 0, Belmore Hercules 2 bt

Hajduk Wanderers 1, Fraser Park 6 bt Hills United 2, Sydney University 5 bt Mt Druitt Town 1,

University of NSW 1 drew Sydney District 1.

U/21:

Greystanes 2 bt Mt Pritchard 0, Hurstville ZSC 4 bt Arncliffe Scots 0, Hajduk Wanderers 13 bt

Belmore Hercules 0, Fraser Park 3 bt Hills United 1, Mt Druitt Town 1 drew Sydney University

1, Sydney District 4 bt University of NSW 0.

U/18:

Mt Pritchard 3 bt Greystanes 1, Hurstville ZSC 2 bt Arncliffe Scots 2, Belmore Hercules 1 drew

Hajduk Wanderers 1, Hills United 3 bt Fraser Park 0, Mt Druitt Town 2 bt Sydney University 0,

University of NSW 3 bt Sydney District 2.

DIVISION THREE:

First Grade:

Western Sydney Lions 6 bt Parramatta City 0, Camden Tigers 2 bt Gladesville United 0,

Hakoah 3 bt Trasandinos 2, Colo Colo 11 bt Maroubra United 0, The Wanderers 3 bt Prospect

United 1, White City 3 bt Liverpool City 1.

Second Grade:

Western Sydney Lions 9 bt Parramatta City 0, Camden Tigers 7 bt Gladesville United 0,

Hakoah 3 bt Trasandinos 1, Maroubra United 1 bt Colo Colo 0, The Wanderers 2 bt Prospect

United 0, White City 4 bt Liverpool City 2.

DIVISION FOUR:

First Grade:

Nepean District 4 bt Prairiewood United 3, Springwood 2 bt CSI Schofields 0, Hawkesbury City

2 bt Auburn Star 1, Balmain 1 bt White Valley 0, Granville Greenisland 7 bt Holy Cross Ryde 1,

Eastern Creek Pioneers 7 bt Sydney Crescent Star 1, United Eagles 2 bt Marrickville 0.

Second Grade:

Springwood 0 drew CSI Schofields 0, Hawkesbury City 4 bt Auburn Star 2, White Valley 1 bt

Balmain 0, Holy Cross Ryde 5 bt Granville Greenisland 2,

Eastern Creek Pioneers 2 bt Sydney Crescent Star 1, United Eagles 2 bt Marrickville 0.

DIVISION FIVE:

First Grade:

Sydney TUSC vs UTS P/P, Homentmen 4 drew Bossy 4, AVA United 5 bt

Earlwood Hermes 1, Kosciusko 3 bt Lithgow Workmen 2, Liverpool Olympic 6 bt Sydney

United Eagles 3, Kellyville Kolts 10 bt Macquarie Sports 1

Second Grade: Sydney TUSC 3 bt UTS 0, Bossy 1 bt Homentmen 0, Earlwood Hermes 1 bt

AVA United 0, Lithgow Workmen 1 drew Kosciusko 1, Sydney United Kings 2 bt Liverpool

Olympic 1, Kellyville Kolts 4 bt Macquarie Sports 3.

WOMEN SUPER LEAGUE:

First Grade: NSW ITC /Academy 2 bt Central Coast 0, NSW ITC/Academy 4 bt Sutherland

Sharks 9, Marconi Fairfield 6 bt Nepean Panthers 1, Central Coast 2 bt Gladesville Ravens 1,

Shoalhaven Assoc 5 bt Sydney United 1, NSW INST/Academy 5 bt UWS Macarthur Rams 0.

U-21: Sydney United 2 bt Sutherland Sharks 0, NSW ITC /Academy 5 bt Central Coast 0,

NNSW ITC/Academy 3 bt Sutherland Sharks 0, Marconi Fairfield 5 bt Nepean Panthers

1, Gladesville Ravens 3 bt Central Coast 0, Sydney United 6 bt Shoalhaven Assoc 0, NSW

INST/Academy 0 drew UWS Macarthur Rams 0.

STATE LEAGUE:

First Grade: Eastern Suburbs 2 bt Manly Warringah 1, Wollongong Wolves 2 bt Gladesville

Hornsby Koalas 0, Bathurst City 14 bt Bankstown United 0, St George Association 4 bt

Roselands 1.

U-19: Manly Warringah 7 bt Eastern Suburbs 2, Wollongong Wolves 4 bt Gladesville Hornsby

Koalas 1, Bathurst City 6 bt Bankstown United 1, St George Association 3 drew Roselands 3..

SOCGER CANBERRA

By Nick Guoth

Belconnen United defeated the Burns Club 4-0 at Greenway Oval, but both managers believed that the need for a true goalscorer was evident.

For Bels, they needed someone to take advantage of all the opportunities they generated, whilst on the other side, Burns lack of goals during the season speaks for itself.

Some of the blame could be laid on the pitch at Greenway as a Rugby League game was played the previous day, but other glaring opportunities needed more embarrassing excuses.

With a gale coming straight through the field, Belconnen decided to take the wind in the hope that they could finish the game off early and have an easier time in the second.

Camped down in the Burns half for nearly all of the period, they generated chance after chance, but in the first half-hour they just could not even force the young Burns keeper, Joachim Milsom, to touch the ball.

Still, some of the credit must go to the Burns team as they pulled everyone behind the ball and tried desperately to remain in the game at the break.

Solid defence from Tim Skinner, Karl Varley and, led by, Peter Thompson nullified all Belconnen scoring opportunities.

It wasn't until the 28th minute that the deadlock was broken. In their first shot on target, Belconnen scored. A corner from Jaime Munro found Matt Whyte free to head past Milsom.

Just five minutes later Munro was nearly made to pay for his error. He was robbed of the ball by Greg Lemin not to far outside his own penalty area.

Lemin's shot beat Rade Kosanovic in goal, but not the upright as it slid away for a goalkick.

Belconnen came out in the second half with more purpose. Even though they were now fighting the gale, they still maintained the pressure. Two early shots, one from Craig Unwin and the other, a header by Lee Pietrukowski, saw Milsom make some spectacular saves.

Then on the hour, Burns should have equalised. A corner kick towards the far post was headed into the path of Mike Katz. His shot was partially saved by Kosanovic and then cleared off the line.

Then Belconnen pounced to put the game out of reach with two goals in seven minutes. A cross from the left wasn't cleared by the Burns defence and when it fell to Scott Manson, he buried the chance.

The third of the game came from a corner. The ball floated in the wind and beat everyone trying to head it. Adrian Dowling, lurking 8m out, noticed it at his feet all of a sudden and made sure there was nothing but net.

Matt Whyte missed a beautiful opportunity only a few minutes later when he was put in for a one-on-one by substitute Luke Larfield. He sent the ball past the keeper, but nowhere near the goal.

In the last few minutes, the final nail was hammered in. Substitute Daniel Camara picked up a loose pass from Burns, beat a few players and shot. The ball hit the right upright and rebounded behind the keeper and across the goal where it found Unwin following in for the easiest of tap-ins.

Bels coach Lino Fierese was happy with the team's performance, but felt they should have taken the chances they generated in the first half. "They made things difficult for us in the first half, but in the second the game was more open."

For Burns, Steve Bryant said "the lads lost concentration, it's difficult and frustrating, but hopefully the lads are learning."

By Dylan Durie

Canberra Deakin kept their finals hopes alive with a convincing 3-0 victory over Gungahlin Juventus in their ACT Premier League match at Jameison Oval on Sunday.

Despite being unable to score until the second half, Deakin were always in control and strikes from Ben Deighan, Paul Ivanic and Marcelo Munoz gave them a deserved victory.

While neither side dominated possession in the first half, it was Deakin who were able to manufacture the bulk of the scoring opportunities.

Their first chance came as early as the 3rd minute when Anthony Rakic blasted into the side netting after being played through by Deighan, then a few minutes later Vince Bodo volleyed over from close range after smart lead up work on the right by Anthony Barac.

Shortly after, Deakin clearly should have had a penalty when Munoz beat several defenders to force his way clear in the penalty box before being fouled as he steadied to shoot, but the referee gave a goal kick.

George Cattanach squandered Juventus' best chance of the half when a clever ball by John Glass sprung the off-side trap but Cattanach could only hit the post when he should have done better.

It took Deakin just 8 minutes of the 2nd half to break the deadlock, Deighan and Munoz combining in a convoluted manner to produce a goal.

First Deighan forced a quality diving save from Juventus' keeper Dennis Langone from 20 yards before being fouled as he followed in. Munoz' low free kick was also deflected just wide before his corner was headed home by Deighan.

Deakin seemed to take confidence from this as they began to dominate the match, being particularly devastating on the break as they enticed Juventus forward.

Paul Ivanic was ruled narrowly offside after Deighan played him in from one such attack, before yet another break saw Ivanic shoot just over from a good position after more good lead up work from Deighan and Bodo.

Juventus' only real chances of the half came from two corners by Utah Nirvana. John Glass failed to get enough power behind a clear header from the first, then from the resulting corner Craig Rankine deserved better as a bullet header was palmed away from the corner of the goal by Deakin keeper Pedro Pavez.

Deakin wrapped up the points in the 67th minute when another fast break saw Ivanic bearing down on goal and scoring from the rebound after his initial effort was blocked by Langone.

The sting vanished from the game after this and Munoz's goal came in injury time, a smart finish at the far post after a quality cross by Mark Djikic.

Deakin coach Bernie Lustica was very pleased with his team's performance, especially as it came after some unflattering results in previous weeks and without the services of Leo Langone or Gabby Exposito.

"It was a good performance, we need a bit of improvement if we are to beat sides better than Juventus, but I am quite happy".

By Greg Walsh

The Weston Creek Royals scored two late goals to force an exciting 3-3 draw with ACT Premier League leaders Monaro at Woden Park on Sunday.

The top-of-the-table clash (which incidentally featured four sets of brothers) provided more twists and turns, thrills and spills than a roller coaster ride, with spectators kept on the edges of their seats to the final whistle.

On the half-hour mark, Steve Lazzari held up the ball outside the Monaro penalty area, before playing back to Yushi Sato. The Royals midfielder slotted an inch-perfect through-ball for Peter Hader, who charged into the box and sent a left-foot shot past Monaro keeper Tony Guarino.

The goal seemed to enliven the Royals, and they almost increased their lead four minutes later. This time Steve Lazzari laid off for Hami Adhami whose first-time effort was well saved down low by Guanno.

In reply, Macor forced a full-stretch save from Weston keeper Hassan Adhami before Martin Lazzari managed to clear the danger.

As the play continued to switch from end to end, Hader set off on a weaving path into the Monaro area before a sliding tackle by Jimmy Baxter halted the run.

Baxter turned provider a minute later when he knocked a long ball towards teammate Darryl North. With his back to goal, the midfielder sent a glancing header spinning into the back of the Weston net to level the scores at the break.

Monaro resumed in fiery mode, and an inspired minute from John Rakic seemed to put the result firmly in their keeping.

In the 55th minute, left wing-back Brent Chick sent a low ball through to Rakic in front of goal. The right half took one touch to control the ball and another to send it past Adhami for a 2-1 lead.

Only a matter of seconds later, Rakic collected the ball just inside the Weston half and passed forward to Danny Macor. The Monaro captain held up the ball before chipping delightfully into the path of Rakic, who had continued his run into the Weston area.

Rakic toed the ball past the advancing Weston keeper before finishing from an acute angle to give Monaro a commanding two-goal lead.

However the Royals were not about to lay down, and over the next thirty minutes they laid constant siege to the Monaro line.

The first of their chances fell to substitute Nabil Adhami, who joined his two brothers in the 67th minute. A minute later he sent a volley over the Monaro goal from two yards out, and six minutes further on Hader did only marginally better when he headed against the crossbar from the same range.

But with time fast running out, the Royals managed to reduce the margin thanks to fullback Adrian Paragalli, who connected with a Tim Webb cross to set up a frantic last few minutes.

And to complete a turbulent ninety minutes of exciting football, Nabil Adhami well and truly atoned for his earlier miss by heading over the Monaro line.

Monaro coach Andrew Monterosso was obviously disappointed with allowing the win to slip away. "We came out in the second half and Raks, in five minutes, turned 1-1 into 3-1 and we were cruising," Monterosso said. "I think the last ...eight or ten minutes we just crumbled, just fell asleep."

Royals coach Jimmy Bland paid tribute to his team's fighting spirit. "We were still hopeful of getting something out of the game, even though we were 3-1 behind," Bland said. "If we can play the next three weeks as we have today, I'll be more than happy."

By Hamish Neal

In what coach Sebastian Giampolo described as probably their "poorest display" of the season Canberra Olympic registered a 3-0 victory over an understrength University of Canberra team at O'Connor Oval.

This ACT Premier League game was won in those vital periods near the start of

the game and half time with Olympic scoring in the first two minutes of both halves. Olympic scored their first of the game when it looked like one of their players had hand-balled the ball near halfway.

Consequently, some Uni defenders and a few Olympic attackers stood back briefly expecting the free-kick to be awarded. This was enough time for a well-directed cross to be aimed at Elli Salloun who angled the ball into the back of the net and struck a significant psychological blow which University never really seemed to recover from.

For the next half an hour Olympic dominated the attacking aspect of the game with the students defending grimly to stay in the match. During this period University, whilst they were repelling Olympics countless attacking raids, weren't clearing the ball with much effectiveness. This came back to haunt them in the 32nd minute when a clearance went only 30 metres. It was fed to Njegosh Popovich from the Olympic midfield and the Universities' keeper Chris Freeman was left sprawling on the deck as the shot flew past him.

Towards the end of the first half the match began to get a little silly with both sides engaging in a lot of back chat. This came to a head after an Olympic player challenged for the ball near the touchline and managed to knock over two of his teammates and a UC player. Strangely Olympic were awarded the free-kick and a back talking UC player was given a yellow card.

Two minutes into the second half Universities defence let them down again when, after an Olympic corner, a rebound off the University defence was put away by Pino Seminara. That goal put University of Canberra out of the match and changed their focus to saving goals rather than scoring them and it saw Olympic ease off the accelerator.

Universities stepped up their attacks in the second half, with Peter Parapiko in particular, trying their utmost to restore some pride but the Olympic defence stopped the raids with ease due to the lack of University support for their attackers. Olympic's best chance, following their third goal, was right towards the end of the game when Freeman couldn't regather after a solid shot and the second bite of the cherry hit the post.

Both coaches weren't completely happy with their sides performances which was patchy. Sebastian Giampolo, of Olympic, saying that his side really focussed on "self-preservation" once they got their three-nil lead. He was impressed with the commitment of the Universities team and is now looking "week-to-week" for his side as they make their charge to the finals.

Meanwhile, in the other game, the two Macedonian backed teams, Queanbeyan City Lions and Capital City Suns played their match in front of some 400 plus spectators at Queanbeyan's Riverside Oval.

The result was never going to be in doubt but the magnitude may have surprised a few. The final score was 10-1 to the Suns, with both Tony Lemezina and Pat Phommaseisy scoring four goals each.

In women's soccer, the ACT Academy of Sport drew with Tuggermang United 1-1, which was a fitting result for both teams. Tuggermang finding some form in the final rounds against the still undefeated ACTAS team.

In other games Belconnen United came back from two consecutive losses to trounced Weston Creek 10-2, with Canberra City downing Burns-Brindabella.

VICTORIA STATE LEAGUE

The week's break from Premier League action has allowed clubs and fans alike to sit back and take stock of the permutations possible in the final three weeks of the season.

With the revamped Premier League set in stone for next season, four clubs must be relegated in three weeks time, and with no finals series for the first time in the Premier League's history there are just three teams left standing in the race for the league championship.

Current leaders Green Gully Cavaliers remain favourites to clinch their first Premier League crown since the league was overhauled in 1992. Indeed it would be their first championship since the halcyon years of 1981-83. Ian Dobson has guided the club to just two losses this season and the Cavs are now in pole position, with three matches against clubs in the lower half of the table to come.

Port Melbourne (second) and Preston (third) meet this Sunday in a clash where a draw would be catastrophic to both teams, with Green Gully threatening to widen the gap with a home clash against (already relegated) Sunshine Georgies.

Fourth placed Bentleigh are probably the 'in form' team at the moment, but while they rue the fact there is no finals series they can look forward to a place in next season's Premier league, as can Fawkner, Melbourne Raiders and probably Bulleen.

Below that lot however, there are some clubs with serious problems.

St Albans Saints at least have their destiny in their own hands and a victory this week at South Dandenong will be good enough to survive, with a home match against Melbourne Raiders the following week providing a second chance, as it were. Altona Magic continue to struggle and a loss at Melbourne Raiders this week will place them in serious trouble. Their neighbours Altona East are in dire straits as well, although they have a slightly easier run in which may yet tilt the balance in their favour.

Already in the relegation zone, Springvale White Eagles and South Dandenong must string victories together if they are to survive. The task seems beyond Springvale but South Dandy, with home games against St Albans (this Saturday) and Melbourne Raiders to come, it may well be that 30 points may just be enough to beat the drop. Unlikely as that may seem, it wouldn't be the strangest thing that's happened in the Premier League this season.

State League - Division One

With the Premier League in recess the spotlight fell on Division One where there is a tight three way tussle for the two prized promotion spots.

Third placed Lalor scored a crucial 2-1 victory

over leaders Heidelberg to prevent the Bergers from opening a nine point gap between the clubs, while second placed Oakleigh took full advantage of that result by overcoming Doncaster Rovers 4-1 at Jack Edwards Reserve and thus draw level on points with Heidelberg.

Former Gold Medal winner Ike Alagiozidis again proved his worth to Oakleigh, opening the scoring with a direct free kick, earned when Bill Nalpanidis was fouled on the edge of the penalty area. Doncaster responded admirably and held the deficit to one goal until four minutes after the break, when Nalpanidis was allowed time to turn and shoot home from close range.

Within five minutes Doncaster had reduced the margin, Steven Tribuzio glancing home a fine cross from Jim Drossos, but one suspected that Oakleigh had another gear or two left.

After seventy-nine minutes, Alagiozidis received a corner at the top of the eighteen yard box, dribbled his way past a marker and drilled a low cross into the danger zone for Andrew Charalambous to slam past Michael Tyrikos.

The scoreline was given a slightly flattering touch when Naum Sekulovski shot home from six yards with only two minutes remaining, but Oakleigh are now convinced that Premier League soccer is within reach once again.

ILLAWARRA PREMIER LEAGUE

In the match of the day in Round 16, the leaders, Northern United visited the team currently in third position, Bulli.

In a typical top of the table clash no quarter was given or asked for with the leaders prevailing over the challengers in a, at times, fiery match.

United's nearest challenges, Port Kembla were also away this week - to sixth placed Wollongong White Eagles. The visitors were also successful in this game with Port Kembla running out comfortable 2-0 winners.

Fourth placed Coniston Lions visited Shoalhaven City and emerged as another away winner with a 2-1 victory over the ninth placed City.

It was not a good day for the home team as only one home team was able to come away this week with full points. That honour goes to Woonona who were able to defeat the last placed Fernhill by three goals to nil.

The biggest win of the round goes to Cringilla Lions who gave their opponents, Wollongong Olympic, a shalacking to the tune of four goals to nil.

In the only other Premier League game the fifth placed Kemlawarra lost some distance in their pursuit of the top four teams when they could only draw 1-1 with the eighth placed Lysaghts.

Premier League Results for Round 16:

Lysaght	1	v	Kemlawarra	1
Shoalhaven City	1	v	Coniston	2
Bulli	1	v	Northern U	2
White Eagles	0	v	Port Kembla	2
Woonona	3	v	Fernhill	0
Woll Olympic	2	v	Cringilla	4

With its victory over Bulli, Northern United retains its lead at the top of the ladder on 37 points. The leaders are still only one point in front of the chasing pack with Port Kembla close behind on 36 points.

These two teams have pulled away a little bit from the third place team, Bulli, after its defeat at the hands of United. Bulli is on 32 points, still close enough to challenge for the championship if it is good enough.

Coniston makes up the top four on 29 points with Kemlawarra in hot pursuit on 25 points.

Fernhill are doomed to the First Division sitting in last spot on four points - six points away from the second last team, Woonona, to whom they lost 3-0 in the just completed round.

First Division Results for Round 15:

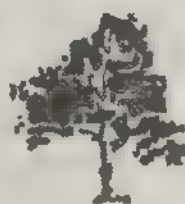
Western Suburbs	2	v	Tarrawanna	2
Berkeley	0	v	Picton	4
Barbs	2	v	Dapto	6
Warilla Wand.	1	v	Illawarra U	0
Helensburgh	1	v	University	2
Highlands	2	v	Bellambi	1
Albion Park	0	v	Shellharbour	2
Balgownie	1	v	South Coast	3

Round 17 Preview:

In the ICU Premier League Round 17 matches most of the games seem to pit the top clubs against the bottom clubs.

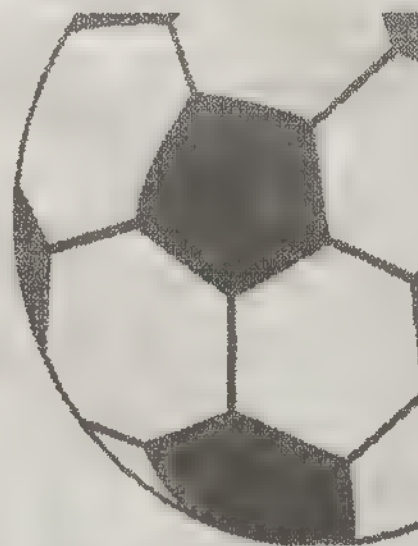
The leaders entertain Shoalhaven City, sitting in ninth spot, and a victory seems to assured.

Second placed Port Kembla can also look forward to a win when they play second last placed Woonona at home.



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ILLAWARRA CREDIT UNION PREMIER LEAGUE ROUND 17

KEMBLAWARRA v WHITE EAGLES - BUTLER MEMORIAL PARK

CONISTON LIONS v LYSAGHTS - J.J. KELLY PARK

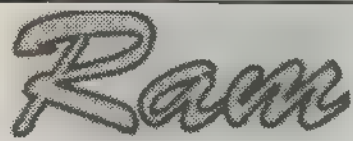
NORTHERN UNITED v SHOALHAVEN CITY - MEMORIAL PARK

CRINGILLA LIONS v BULLI - CREHAN PARK

PORT KEMBLA v WOONONA - WETHERALL PARK

FERNHILL v WOLLONGONG OLYMPIC - TOWRADGI PARK

INSIDE JUNIOR SOCCER



BILL TURNER CUP



Being positive or being negative will be a big factor for the remaining schools in the 1999 Bill Turner Cup.

By now the competition should almost have arrived for the Final Sixteen deciders, however, rain, rain and more rain has, so to speak, put a damper on large portions of the series.

Some area is full round behind while in one case they are three off the pace.

Terry Hampton, the Senior Manager, who takes over control after the magic round of 32 has been reached is expecting all the coaches to make a special effort to get matches played.

With the Queensland final scheduled for Perry Park, Brisbane on August 29 they have only one game to catch up, which appears well within their reach.

Among the upper coastal area of Northern NSW the council owned grounds have been withdrawn for school fixtures which has caused havoc. This is where Terry Hampton will be looking for a couple of double up matches to catch up.

Under the astute leadership of

Lindsay Hewison, all of the Sydney Areas are getting close to the mark.

Riverina Western NSW, Illawarra and Hunter have almost caught up. Over in the ACT, Chris Conti will double up the fixtures, as well, so that they catch up, too.

Major Sponsor

Unfortunately the Bill Turner Cup was not able to attract a major sponsor this year, though it did get close on a couple of occasions.

The Northern NSW Soccer Federation is the major assisting sponsor and assistance is also coming from the Queensland Soccer Federation and the ACT Soccer Federation.

The balance for the capital required to administer the competition is coming from the schools via a donation of a \$20 entry fee, which equates to about \$1.25 per player.

This is the first time that we've had to administer an entry fee and it is certainly not what the Executive wanted to do. However, the majority of schools had no hesitation in sending the donation.

Many of the schools who did not play this year have indicated that they will be back in 2000.

Plate Competition

The Bill Turner Cup Executive felt that the possibility of paying a \$20 entry fee and then losing in the first game would be disappointing for most teams.

Consequently, they introduced a Plate Competition into each area for all those teams losing in the first round. It has had a mixed reception but definitely more positive than negative.

Some of the schools were quoted as saying that should they win "their area", they want to play against another Area.

This was not the original plan as it could lead to the 'tail wagging the dog'. However, no embargo was placed on them playing whoever they liked but the medals awarded would only be for the area winners and finalist.

Again, many schools choosing not to play on in the Plate Competition this year, have indicated their enthusiasm for next season.

There is some exciting news in the offing which will be revealed in Inside Soccer shortly, however we wish it was the name of a major sponsor!

Bill Turner Cup results

Round 4

Oakhill College 2 Holly Cross College 1, Patrician Bros Blacktown 3 Kingswood 0, Christ Catholic 1 Cranebrook 0, Kadina 3 Byron Bay 0, St Augustines Cairns 2 Kirwan 0, Emmaus College Rocky 2 Holy Spirit Mackay 1, Coolum 1 Gympie 0, St Laurence 2 Westside Christian 1, Cavendish Rd 6 Anglican Grammar 1, Palm Beach Currumbin 2 Beaudesert 0.

Round 5

Warners Bay 1 St Edwards Gosford 0, Figtree 3 Nowra 1, St Augustine Cairns 3 Emmaus 1.

NSW SUPER YOUTH LEAGUE RESULTS

SUPER LEAGUE:

U/13: Blacktown City 2 bt Leichhardt Tigers 1, Sydney Olympic 2 bt Gladesville Hornsby 0, Parramatta Eagles 0 drew Southern Branch 0, Sydney United 1 bt Central Coast 0, Newcastle Breakers 1 bt Macarthur Rams 0, Wollongong Wolves 2 bt Southern Districts 1, Eastern Suburbs 1 drew Manly Warringah 1, Marconi Fairfield 1 drew Sutherland Sharks 1, Manly Warringah 2 drew Marconi Fairfield 2, Parramatta Eagles 3 bt Central Coast 0, Newcastle Breakers 0 drew Leichhardt Tigers 0.

U/14: Blacktown City 1 bt Leichhardt Tigers 0, Sydney Olympic 2 bt Gladesville Hornsby 0, Parramatta Eagles 3 drew Southern Branch 3, Sydney United 4 bt Central Coast 1, Macarthur Rams 2 bt Newcastle Breakers 1, Wollongong Wolves drew Southern Districts 1, Manly Warringah 2 bt Eastern Suburbs 1, Marconi Fairfield 2 drew Sutherland Sharks 2, Manly Warringah 2 bt Marconi Fairfield 1, Parramatta Eagles 2 bt Central Coast 1, Leichhardt Tigers 3 bt Newcastle Breakers 2.

U/15: Blacktown City 1 bt Leichhardt Tigers 0, Gladesville Hornsby 3 drew Sydney Olympic 3, Southern Branch 2 bt Parramatta Eagles 0, Sydney United 2 bt Central Coast 0, Macarthur Rams 4 bt Newcastle Breakers 0, Wollongong Wolves 3 bt Southern Districts 2, Eastern Suburbs 2 bt Manly Warringah 0, Marconi Fairfield 1 bt Sutherland Sharks 0, Marconi Fairfield 7 bt Manly Warringah 1, Central Coast 2 bt Parramatta Eagles 0, Newcastle Breakers 5 bt Leichhardt Tigers 0.

U/16: Blacktown City 2 bt Leichhardt Tigers 1, Parramatta Eagles 2 bt Southern Branch 0, Central Coast 1 bt Sydney United 0, Newcastle Breakers 2 bt Macarthur Rams 0, Southern Districts 3 bt Wollongong Wolves 2, Eastern

Suburbs 2 drew Manly Warringah 2, Marconi Fairfield 3 bt Sutherland Sharks 1, Marconi Fairfield 4 bt Manly Warringah 0, Parramatta Eagles 2 bt Central Coast 0, Newcastle Breakers 6 bt Leichhardt Tigers 1.

YOUTH LEAGUE:

DIVISION ONE

U/13: St George 2 bt Canterbury M'Ville 0, Hills United 4 bt Canterbury M'Ville 1, Bankstown Association 10 bt Fairfield Bulls 1, Illawarra Lions 4 bt St George 0, Blacktown Association 1 bt AC United 0, Rockdale City Suns 2 bt Stanmore Hawks 1, Penrith Panthers 2 bt Canterbury Association 0, Bonnyrigg White Eagles 1 drew Ryde City 1, Illawarra Lions 3 bt AC United 2, Hills United 4 bt Canterbury Assoc, Rockdale City Suns 2 bt Penrith Panthers 0, Fairfield Bulls 2 bt Canterbury Marrickville 1, St George 2 bt Stanmore Hawks 0.

U/14: Canterbury M'Ville 0 drew St George 0, Canterbury M'Ville 2 bt Hills United 1, Fairfield Bulls 2 drew Bankstown Association 2, Illawarra Lions 1 drew St George 1, Blacktown Association 2 bt AC United 1, Rockdale City Suns 3 bt Stanmore Hawks 0, Canterbury Association 2 bt Penrith Panthers 1, Ryde City 1 bt Bonnyrigg White Eagles 0, AC United 3 bt Illawarra Lions 1, Canterbury Association 0 drew Hills United 0, Penrith Panthers 1 bt Rockdale City Suns 0, Canterbury Marrickville 1 drew Fairfield Bulls 1, St George 2 bt Stanmore Hawks 0.

U/15: Hills United 3 bt Canterbury M'Ville 0, Fairfield Bulls 1 bt Bankstown Association 0, Illawarra Lions 1 drew St George 1, AC United 2 bt Blacktown Association 0, Stanmore Hawks 3 bt Rockdale City Suns 0, Penrith Panthers 0 drew Canterbury Association 0, Bonnyrigg White Eagles 1 bt Ryde City 0, AC United 0 drew Illawarra Lions 0, Hills United 1 bt

Canterbury Assoc, Penrith Panthers 3 bt Rockdale City Suns 1, Canterbury Marrickville 1 bt Fairfield Bulls 0, Stanmore Hawks 0 drew St George 0.

U/16: Hills United 1 bt Canterbury M'Ville 0, Bankstown Association 3 bt Fairfield Bulls 2, Illawarra Lions 1 drew St George 1, Blacktown Association 2 bt AC United 1, Stanmore Hawks 2 bt Rockdale City Suns 1, Canterbury Association 3 bt Penrith Panthers 1, Bonnyrigg White Eagles 1 bt Ryde City 0, AC United 3 drew Illawarra Lions 3, AC United vs Illawarra Lions, Canterbury Assoc 3 bt Hills United 0, Penrith Panthers 1 drew Rockdale City Suns 1, Canterbury Marrickville 1 drew Fairfield 1, Stanmore Hawks 2 bt St George 0.

DIVISION TWO

U/13: Nepean Association 3 bt Hawkesbury 0, Nepean Association 1 drew Hajduk Wanderers 1, Macquarie Sports 3 bt Mt Druitt Town 2, Granville Association 3 bt Moorebank Sports 2, Parramatta City 1 drew Camden Tigers 1, Ku-Ring-Gai Association 4 bt CSI Schofields 0, Mt Pritchard 1 bt Hawkesbury 0, Ku-ring-gai Assoc 8 bt Parramatta City 0. **U/14:** Nepean Association 2 bt Hawkesbury City 1, Nepean Association 2 bt Hajduk Wanderers 1, Macquarie Sports 2 bt Mt Druitt Town 0, Granville Association 3 bt Moorebank Sports 0, Camden Tigers 1 bt Parramatta City 0, Ku-Ring-Gai Association 3 bt CSI Schofields 0, Hawkesbury City 3 bt Mt Pritchard 1, Ku-ring-gai Assoc 1 bt Parramatta City 0. **U/15:** Nepean Association 2 bt Hawkesbury City 1, Hajduk Wanderers 3 bt Nepean Association 1, Macquarie Sports 1 bt Mt Druitt Town 0, Granville Association 1 drew Moorebank Sports 0, Parramatta City 1 bt Camden Tigers 0, Ku-Ring-Gai Association 5 bt CSI Schofields 0, Mt Pritchard 1 drew Hawkesbury City 1.

Parramatta City 3 bt Ku-ring-gai Assoc 1. **U/16:** Nepean Association 6 bt Hawkesbury City 1, Nepean Association 3 bt Hajduk Wanderers 0, Macquarie Sports 1 bt Mt Druitt Town 0, Granville Association 3 bt Moorebank Sports 0, Camden Tigers 4 bt Parramatta City 3, Ku-Ring-Gai Association 3 bt CSI Schofields 0, Mt Pritchard 4 bt Hawkesbury City 1, Ku-ring-gai Assoc 0 drew Parramatta City 0.

CADET LEAGUE:

DIVISION ONE:

U/11: Marconi Fairfield 1 bt Bonnyrigg White Eagles 0, Canterbury M'Ville 3 bt Marconi Fairfield 0, Parramatta Eagles 1 bt Bonnyrigg White Eagles 0, Eastern Suburbs 1 bt Ryde City 0, Leichhardt Tigers 0 drew Macarthur Rams 0, Sydney United 1 bt Parramatta City 0, Canterbury Marrickville 3 bt St George 1. **U/12:** Eastern Suburbs 1 bt Ryde City 0, Macarthur Rams 4 bt Leichhardt Tigers 0, Sydney United 2 bt Parramatta City 1, St George 2 bt Canterbury Marrickville 0.

DIVISION TWO:

U/11: Stanmore Hawks 1 bt Hills United 0, Illawarra Lions 1 bt AC United 0, Penrith Panthers 2 bt Mt Pritchard 0, Illawarra Lions 4 bt CSI Schofields 0, Hajduk Wanderers 4 bt Hurstville City 1, Macquarie Sports 7 bt Moorebank Sports 0, Hawkesbury City 5 bt Mt Pritchard 0, Penrith Panthers 1 bt AC United 0. **U/12:** Stanmore Hawks 2 bt Hills United 1, Illawarra Lions 0 drew AC United 0, Penrith Panthers 4 bt Mt Pritchard 0, CSI Schofields 1 bt Illawarra Lions 0, Hajduk Wanderers 1 drew Hurstville City 1, Macquarie Sports 5 bt Moorebank Sports 0, Hawkesbury City 4 bt Mt Pritchard 0, Penrith Panthers 0 drew AC United 0.

INSIDE WORLD SOCCER

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**ALL THE NEWS AS
WE CLOSE IN TO
THE START OF THE
PREMIER LEAGUE**



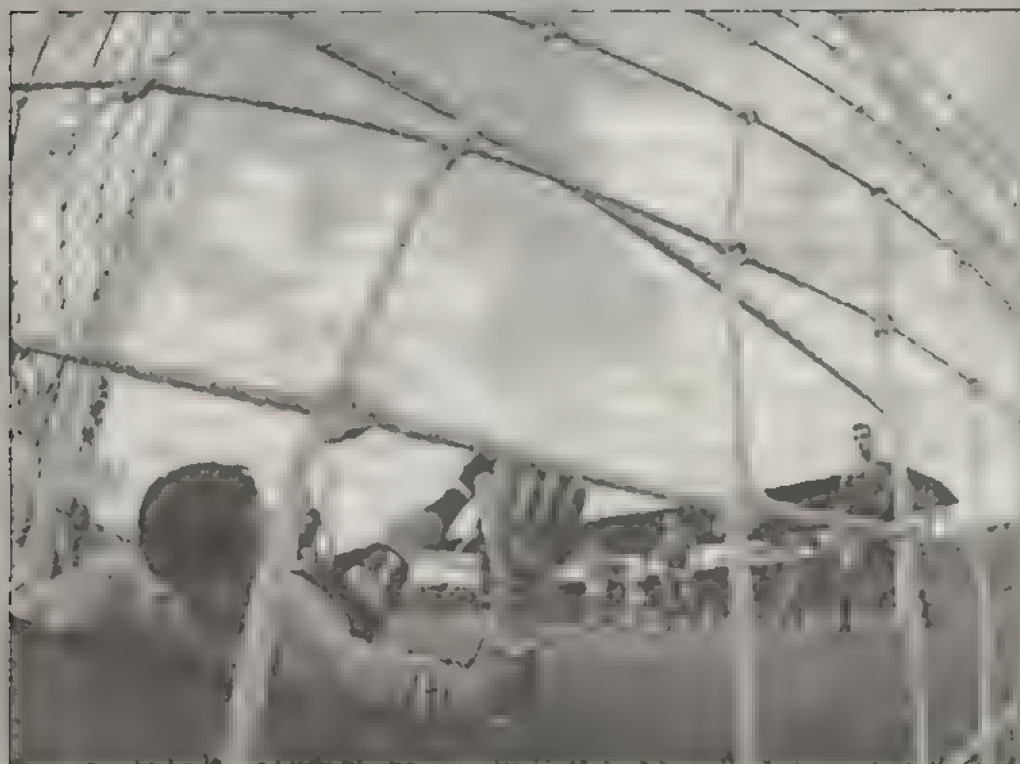
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UPDATES FROM
ALL PARTS OF
EUROPE**



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CONFEDERATIONS CUP

NEW ZEALAND DOWN IN FIRST GAME

In front of a sun-drenched capacity crowd of 60,000 at Jalisco Stadium, the U.S. national team defeated New Zealand, 2-1, on the opening day of the 1999 FIFA Confederations Cup. The victory puts the U.S. in second place on goal-difference in Group B, behind Brazil, who defeated Germany, 4-0, in the tournament's opening game.

"I'm happy with the three points [for the victory], but disappointed in the final result," said U.S. coach Bruce Arena. "We felt we played well enough to win by a few more goals."

After some sustained pressure early in the match, Brian McBride finally put the U.S. ahead in the 26th minute. Jovan Kirovski collected a ball on the left side and sent a driven cross into the U.S. penalty area. McBride, unmarked and charging the cross in full stride, met the ball with a bullet header that found the left corner of the net, out of reach of New Zealand goalkeeper Michael Utting. The goal was McBride's eighth in 30 international appearances.

The Kiwis nearly tied the score four minutes later when midfielder Chris Jackson controlled the ball inside the USA's six-yard box. Jackson muscled past a defender near the left post, but found Kasey Keller diving at his feet to deflect his attempted shot.

The USA doubled the lead with a deserving goal by Kirovski in the 58th minute. Eddie Lewis, who moments earlier had a left-footed blast saved brilliantly by Utting, served a corner kick from

the left side into the penalty area. Kirovski out-jumped his defender and snapped a header into the net from seven yards out,

This time, Keller went low and to his right in the 60th minute to parry wide a point-blank shot by Aaran Lines, New Zealand's speedy left winger.

In injury time, however, New Zealand captain Chris Zoricich netted a world-class goal off a free kick from 24 yards to cut the final scoreline in half. The defender stepped up and hit a bending ball with the outside of his right foot that hooked away from Keller and into the right corner, ruining the American shutout bid.

In the first game here today, Brazil soundly defeated Germany, 4-0, behind single goals from Ze Roberto and Ronaldinho, and two from Alex. The recently crowned Copa America champs dismantled the Germans in the second half with four unanswered strikes.

"Brazil proved today that they are one of the best teams in the world," continued Arena. "It will be a great challenge and a great experience for us as a team."

The United States will continue on in the tournament this week, playing the mighty Brazilians on July 28 and Germany on July 30. Should the team advance as one of the top two teams in Group B, the USA will play a semifinal match on Aug. 1 in either Guadalajara or Mexico City.



Vaughan Coveny starred for New Zealand

his 6th goal in 31 appearances.

After the second goal, Keller again made a superb save to hold off the Kiwis.

Match Statistics:

USA 2

McBride 25, Kirovski 58

New Zealand 1

Zoricich 90.

USA - Keller, Agoos, Llamasa, Fraser, Williams, Harkes, Lewis (Hejduk 76), Stewart (Olsen 73), Kirovski, McBride, Jones (Moore 82).

New Zealand - Utting, Vucelich, Douglas (Smith 73), Zoricich, Lines, Wilkinson, Jackson, Atkinson (Nelson 57), Burton, Bouckenhooghe, Coveny (Elrick 62).

Yellow Card: New Zealand - Coveny 32.

Referee: Ubaldo Aquino (Paraguay).

Attendance: 60,000.

Shots: United States 9
New Zealand 5

Saves: United States 3
New Zealand 5

Corner kicks: United States 3
New Zealand 3

Fouls: United States 16
New Zealand 12

Offside: United States 7
New Zealand 2.

BRAZIL DEMOLISH GERMANY

Titelholders Brazil erupted into life in the second half to crush Germany 4-0 in the opening game of the 1999 Confederations Cup soccer tournament on Saturday.

Two goals by Alex and one apiece by Ze Roberto and 19-year-old Ronaldinho underscored the strength of the South American champions against a lackluster German team.

A crowd of 70,000 saw Ze Roberto open the scoring in the 62nd minute with a powerful volley from 12 metres that German goalkeeper Jens Lehman parried into the net.

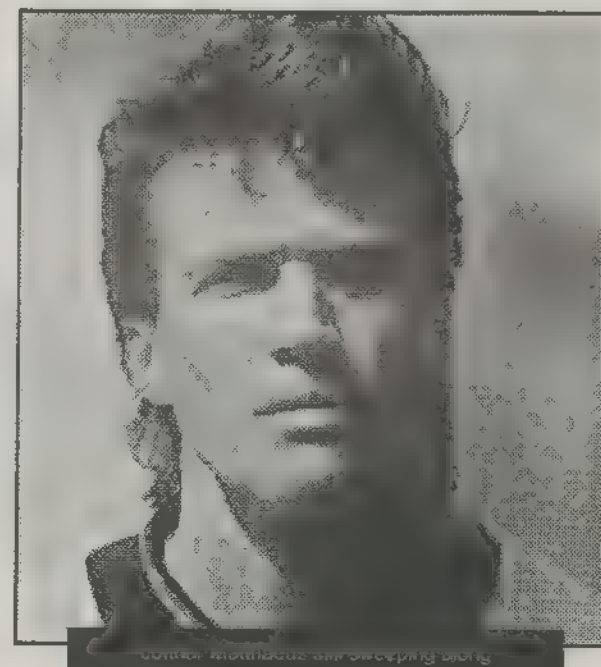
Ronaldinho put Brazil 2-0 up 10 minutes later from the penalty spot. Lehman saved the initial kick but the ball rebounded to Ronaldinho who made no mistake with his second shot.

Germany faded as the game progressed and Alex took advantage of some poor marking to head home from close range to give Brazil its third goal on 86 minutes.

With four minutes left, Alex ran half the length of the pitch before rounding the goalkeeper to score Brazil's fourth.

Both teams were without key players for the match, which kicked off an 11-day competition comprising the best teams in FIFA's six confederations plus the World Cup champions and host nation.

Germany was invited in place of World Cup holders



France, which declined to take part.

Brazil and Germany are in Group B along with New Zealand and the United States.

Group A, which plays in Mexico City, comprises Mexico, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Bolivia.

The two top-ranked teams from each group advance to the semifinals played August 1 and the final takes place August 4.

Match Statistics:

Brazil: 4

Ze Roberto 62, Ronaldinho (pen.) 72, Alex 86, 87

Germany: 0

Brazil: - Dida, Evanilson, Odvan, Joao Carlos, Serginho, Flavio Conceicao (Warley 62), Vampeta, Emerson, Ze Roberto (Beto 82), Christian (Alex 62), Ronaldinho.

Germany: - Lehmann, Matthaeus, Woerns, Heinrich (Maul 73), Linke, Ballack, Scholl, Ricken, Preetz (Marschall 70), Wosz, Neuville (Gerber 78).

Yellow cards: Brazil - Emerson 12, Vampeta 17; Germany - Scholl 9.

Referee: Gilberto Alcala (Mexico).

STOP MOANING ABOUT FOREIGN LEGION

Kevin Keegan is not against the foreign invasion of the Premiership even though he admits it could force him to pick "reserves" for his England team this season.

And Keegan has a stark message for the growing number of disgruntled home-grown players who complain their careers are being blocked by overseas imports.

"Stop moaning, work harder and if you still don't make it then accept it is because you are not good enough and not because of the foreigners over here," he said.

Keegan's views fly in the face of those held by many leading figures in the English game, including players' union chief Gordon Taylor, who believes the flood of foreigners could ultimately ruin England's hopes of fielding a successful team in the 2006 World Cup.

"I don't share that view," said Keegan. "My view is that English youngsters are going to have to be a bit better to force their way through and I think that is a good thing."

"It doesn't worry me. I don't need hundreds of top-class youngsters coming through - you will never get that. But we need to get a few more, and they will come

through if they are good enough.

"The gauntlet is down for the kids of this country. Are they going to hide behind the excuse 'there are too many foreigners, we won't get our chance', or get off their backsides, work even harder, become even more dedicated?"

"If they give it their best shot and don't make it that will be because they are not good enough, not because Arsene Wenger or Gerard Houllier has fetched foreigners in."

Keegan accepts if he took an anti-foreigner stance he would be open to accusations of hypocrisy. After all he was one of the earliest international "mercenaries" when he quit Liverpool to play for German club Hamburg back in 1977.

And as an innovative manager at Newcastle he introduced the exotic talents of David Ginola, Tino Asprilla and Philippe Albert. "I've been guilty of it and would be hypocritical if I said anything different."

Keegan admits the foreign invasion could result in him picking players who have become victims of the "squad rotation" policies adopted by the bigger clubs, players who spend as much time on the bench or in the reserves as in the first

team.

"Things are changing. Twenty years ago the England manager would have never picked a player who wasn't playing regularly for Manchester United or Liverpool," he said. "But now you can because you know they are good enough it's just that there is so much talent around they don't play every game. "Obviously it would be a problem selecting someone who hasn't played a first-team game for a long time but most of them get enough action to keep them sharp and fit."

Worries over England's qualification for next summer's European Championship finals have clearly not affected Keegan's enthusiasm

Last week he happily spent two hours coaching youngsters at the opening of the JJB-adidas soccerdome in Wigan, an indoor facility housing 11 pitches and the largest of its kind in Europe.

Keegan is also planning to go into schools this summer, not just to inspire youngsters to become players but also to become coaches, referees or even administrators. "Obviously my priority is to be successful as England manager. Kids will always follow the Man Uniteds and

Liverpools, but the FA is the biggest "club" in the country and we should be going out and letting people know a bit more what we are about

"The vast majority of kids are never going to be professional players but that doesn't mean they should be lost to the game. The FA is responsible for coaching and refereeing as well and kids might want to pursue a career in those areas"

Keegan believes the study of football-related subjects can be just as beneficial to a child's education as coaching is to their ball-skills development. "Interest in football is sky-high at the moment and we must capitalise on it."

Keegan was hugely impressed by the Wigan soccerdome and said: "In my day, we used to knock the ball against the wall in the back garden and it didn't do us any harm, but this is a wonderful facility."

"What is increasingly obvious is that if we don't produce kids in the future it won't be because the facilities are not there. It will be because there are too many distractions or they just haven't got the inclination to put their minds to it."

POLICE CHARGED

Two former Yorkshire police chiefs have been sent for trial for the manslaughter of two of the 96 victims of the Hillsborough soccer tragedy more than 10 years ago.

The two senior officers, both now retired, were in charge of crowd control at the Sheffield Wednesday ground for the ill-fated FA Cup semi-final in 1989 between Liverpool and Nottingham Forest. The charges, the first criminal case arising from the tragedy, came after a private prosecution brought by victims' families

A spokesman said later: "This action is not about revenge against the police or finding scapegoats. It is about right and wrong and a determined search for the truth"

The men were charged with the manslaughter of two Liverpool fans - John Anderson, 62, and 18-year-old John Aspinall - who died when police allowed a surge of late arrivals to pour into the Leppings Lane end of the ground, crushing hundreds of people against the stadium's three-metre-high wire enclo-

tures.

Ninety-five Liverpool fans died moments into the match in April 1989

Another victim, who had suffered brain damage, was added to the list when his life support machine was switched off days later.

The former chief superintendent of South Yorkshire police, David Duckenfield, 54, and the former superintendent Bernard Murray, 57, were also charged with wilful neglect of public duty.

In sending the men for trial after the nine-day hearing which ended on Tuesday, the Leeds magistrate rejected defence claims that the men could not receive a fair trial because of the enormous publicity the tragedy had received in Britain.

The magistrate also committed the men despite a decision by the Director of Public Prosecutions not to proceed with charges.

The Hillsborough tragedy prompted one of the country's longest inquests, and two public inquiries, and led to the introduction of all-seat stadiums throughout Britain.

ATLETICO WANTS HASSELDANK

Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink is threatening to quit Leeds United unless they make him their highest paid player on a basic £2million a year.

The 27-year-old Dutch striker still has two years of his contract remaining but the Leeds hierarchy have offered him a £1m-a-year deal that would place him alongside their highest-paid players - David Batty, Nigel Martyn and skipper Lucas Radebe - as a reward for his goalscoring heroics

Hasselbaink, however, has rejected that offer, insisting he is Leeds' best player and deserves to be paid twice as much as any teammate.

It is a scenario that threatens to create the kind of dressing-room turmoil that engulfed Nottingham Forest when Dutch striker Pierre van Hooijdonk demanded special status last season

Elland Road chairman Peter Ridsdale and manager David O'Leary have persuaded a string of key players like Harry Kewell and Jonathon Woodgate to sign long-term contracts this summer.

They could have made Hasselbaink wait for another year before reviewing his terms but decided he deserved his pay rise.

But Hasselbaink is insisting they must shatter their pay structure to accommodate him. Atletico Madrid are waiting in the wings to see whether or not Hasselbaink is prepared to force Leeds into selling him.

As yet, there has been no formal approach from the Spaniards

but their president, Jesus Gil, has confirmed his interest in the £10m striker.

Chelsea enquired about Hasselbaink, who joined Leeds for £1.6m two years ago, before recruiting Chris Sutton, while George Graham, the manager who brought the Dutchman into English football, may fancy taking him to Spurs.

Meanwhile Leeds United have dismissed claims of a row between manager David O'Leary and the Elland Road board over striker Jimmy Hasselbaink's future.

Atletico Madrid are reported to be ready to bid £10.5million for the Dutchman and O'Leary is widely quoted as threatening to quit if Hasselbaink goes

A statement from Leeds said "Contrary to speculation in certain national newspapers, both David O'Leary and the Leeds board are in total agreement regarding the position of Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink."

"He has been offered a new four-year contract on terms that would make him the highest paid player at the club. Clearly this has been done in an attempt to demonstrate that we wish to keep him."

"At this moment the contract has not been accepted. Leeds United have had no direct approach from Atletico Madrid or any other club for Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink."

Atletico president Jesus Gil had been quoted claiming "the Leeds manager has threatened to quit if Hasselbaink signs for Atletico. But we are still going for Hasselbaink because he is a striker we want to sign."

ANELKA TOLD TO LEAVE IN 48 HOURS

Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger has reportedly set Nicolas Anelka a 48-hour deadline to complete his move away from Highbury.

The Gunners boss has threatened to take the unsettled French international off the transfer list and make him honour his contract if the player does not finalise a deal with Lazio.

French forward Anelka has long been known to want out of Highbury and has left the Gunners in no doubt that he intends to move to Italy's Serie A at the earliest opportunity

But the 20-year-old's prospective £22million transfer to Lazio has stalled and it now appears that Wenger has put the ball firmly back in Anelka's court.

Meanwhile Wenger admits he is now in a worse position than at the start of last season as Arsenal bid to end Manchester United's dominance.

Wenger then had three recognised strikers - Dennis Bergkamp, Nicolas Anelka and Kaba Diawara - before adding Kanu six months later.

But, with Diawara back in France and Anelka certain to leave or find himself in the reserves, Wenger's strikeforce is already light at the start of what promises to be Arsenal's most gruelling season ever. Wenger's hand will be partially strengthened by the imminent arrival of Thierry Henry from Juventus for £11 million but he can hardly be classed as an out-and-out scorer in the Anelka mould

Wenger has scoured Europe and South America for a replacement but has drawn a blank to the point where he admits his concerns.

"I don't know who I'm going to get," he said. "That's my main problem and it's one I definitely do not need"

WEST HAM AND JUVENTUS THROUGH

Frank Lampard ensured West Ham did not become a laughing stock in Helsinki. The Hammers seemed to be on the brink of being knocked out of the Intertoto Cup against Finnish part-timers Jokerit.

But in the 69th minute Lampard produced an emphatic 20-yard free-kick which now puts his side into the next phase of this competition.

They will now play Dutch side Heerenveen tomorrow night in the first leg of the semi-final stage, putting the Hammers closer to clinching "real" European football in the coming season.

Last week, the Hammers had disappointed as they struggled to overcome Jokerit at Upton Park. Paul Kitson's early goal proving to be the difference between the two sides.

Redknapp, though, believed another week's pre-season training would prove enough to give his side the edge.

That said, West Ham went into the game without their teenage sensation Joe Cole and veteran Ian Wright, both of whom had sustained injuries in the first encounter.

It should not have made any difference against a side who are no better in terms of technical ability than an English Second Division club.

Early on West Ham suggested they would make their class count. In the third minute, Kitson reached a cross from Marc Keller and headed powerfully goalwards only to see keeper Pasi Laaysonen produce an excellent reflex save.

A minute later, Lampard unleashed a low drive which bounced back off the post and it appeared only a matter of time before West Ham would breach the Finnish defence.

But just as it had at Upton Park, the early promise soon evaporated against a team in the middle of their domestic season who possessed greater fitness and dogged discipline.

Gradually, the Finns began to take the game to West Ham, whose lack of match practice was all too evident. Not least in Rob Jones, starting a senior match for the first time in 18 months following his move from Liverpool.

The former England right-back was hoping to impress enough to persuade Redknapp to offer him a contract for the coming season. But Jones was woefully out of touch and in the 14th minute got himself booked unnecessarily for an ill-timed challenge.

Not that he was the only culprit. Neil Ruddock was well off the pace and in the 33rd minute that proved decisive.

Ruddock ought to have closed down Tero Koskela when he received the ball on the edge of the penalty area. But he delayed his challenge, which enabled the Jokerit forward to turn and then take aim. His low, left-foot drive was well placed and it beat Hammers keeper Shaka Hislop just inside the left post.

That made the tie all square and West Ham needed to up the tempo if they were to get back on

course of what they hoped to be the beginning of a UEFA Cup campaign this season.

Only Trevor Sinclair, however, appeared to possess the urgency to test the Finnish opposition. He was unlucky shortly before the interval when he produced a spectacular overhead kick which drifted just over the bar.

At half-time Redknapp withdrew Jones and replaced him with Steve Potts, suggesting Jones' hopes of overcoming the knee injury which threatened his future in the game may prove to be too optimistic.

West Ham might have given themselves some breathing space shortly into the second half when Lampard surged forward but he shot well wide.

Paolo Di Canio found his way into a dangerous position on 50 minutes and his low cross needed only a touch, but Kitson was unable to get there before the ball was hacked clear.

Lampard passed up a glorious opportunity to level seven minutes later when he latched on to a loose clearance but side-footed high over the bar.

Laaksonen had little to do and his most anxious moment came when a 61st-minute Marc Keller cross deflected off a defender and almost crept in.

But the brave resistance of the Finns finally broke with 21 minutes remaining, after Di Canio was fouled on the edge of the penalty area.

The Italian was among a posse of players standing over the ball as the wall formed, but it was Lampard who redeemed himself for his earlier miss by sending an unstoppable shot high into Laaksonen's top corner, putting the Hammers through 2-1 on aggregate.

Meanwhile European giant Juventus scraped through to the semi-finals of the Intertoto Cup after being held to a goalless home draw by Romanian minnows Ceahlau Piatra Neamt.

The Italians, who appeared in three consecutive European Cup finals from 1996 and reached the semifinals last season, were forced to enter the Intertoto Cup after finishing only sixth in Serie A.

They had only twice before failed to qualify for Europe, in 1962 and 1991, but risked embarrassment with a lacklustre display today against a team few Italian fans would have ever heard of. In the semifinals they play another outsider, Rostelmash Rostov of Russia, who came through on the away goals rule after a 2-2 aggregate draw with Croatia's Varteks Verazdin.

Hamburg SV, another former European champion club, won 3-2 at Basle of Switzerland to go through on the away goals rule following its 1-0 home defeat in the first leg.

Among other sides to progress were Germany's MSV Duisburg, French duo Montpellier and Metz, Austria Vienna and Trabzonspor of Turkey.

Inside Soccer

O'LEARY CAN'T FORGET NOR FORGIVE GRAHAM

David O'Leary has not spoken to his old boss, George Graham, for months. And, despite the temptation, he resisted making a triumphant call to Tottenham when Michael Bridges completed his £5 million transfer last weekend.

The ill feeling provoked by on-loan signing Willem Korsten's defection from O'Leary's Leeds to Graham's Tottenham in March shattered their relationship.

The partnership, nurtured during almost nine years as manager and player at Arsenal and enhanced as manager and assistant at Elland Road before Graham's move south 10 months ago, remains in tatters.

When both clubs wanted to sign Bridges this summer, Spurs snatched the initiative and the 20-year-old striker was deposited in a room with Graham and chairman Alan Sugar to ratify the deal. Bridges was given a same-day deadline to make up his mind but rejected the Spurs offer.

Leeds bided their time and their patience paid off as Bridges this week became O'Leary's fourth major signing this summer after Danny Mills, Michael Duberry and Erik Bakke.

O'Leary chooses his words carefully when discussing his former mentor. "It's true I haven't spoken to George for months. I just feel very let down on the Korsten deal."

Yet, he maintained: "I'm here because of George Graham. He was wonderful to work with."

He gave me a great deal of responsibility.

"He always knew I wanted to be a manager in my own right one day."

"The biggest learning process for me came when I joined Leeds two years ago with George. I wouldn't have liked to follow Howard Wilkinson. The club needed sorting out."

O'Leary made a barnstorming start by guiding Leeds into Europe with a brand of attacking football far removed from the Graham formula.

While O'Leary's home-grown kids and ambitious signings prosper, there has been a virtual purge of players Graham brought in.

O'Leary is unapologetic. "This is my club now," he said. "I've sold Gunnar Halle and Clyde Wijnhard, and Bruno Ribeiro isn't in my team. Danny Granville is for sale, as are Derek but ley and David Robertson."

"George spent nearly £18m. I've spent around £16m and, given what we've achieved, I think that's fine. The policy has been to get the players the manager has asked for."

O'Leary can see right-back Mills and home-grown centre-back Jonathon Woodgate establishing themselves in the England squad.

He said: "When Kevin Keegan took over he asked me about players. In the previous two years Glenn Hoddle never called us once."

"In Mills and Woodgate we have two players who can push on, become great players for Leeds and represent England."

UNITED JUNKET ENDS WITH LEISURELY WIN

It was a team worth \$A92.88 million playing a team worth \$A774,000 and the result routine and expected.

Treble-winning English giants Manchester United completed its tour of Australia and the Far East with a 2-0 victory over Hong Kong club side South China in front of a 40,000 crowd.

Under-strength United, missing stars David Beckham, Ryan Giggs, Roy Keane, Ole Gunnar Solskjaer and Nicky Butt, were never threatened in a match which amounted to little more than a training exercise.

Even without its glamour-boys, United were able to field a side valued roughly at something close to \$A92.88 million.

Its opponents, used to playing in one of the weakest leagues in Asia in front of crowds of a two or three thousand, have an estimated value of \$A774,000.

The disparity in class was evident throughout as United stroked the ball around at leisure, clearly deciding not to over exert themselves in fierce tropical heat and humidity.

After a slow start England international

Teddy Sheringham fired the Red Devils into the lead, slamming home a low cross whipped in from the right flank by Andy Cole on 22 minutes.

Five minutes later Cole added his name to the scoresheet after a swift breakout from midfield by United.

Jordi Cruyff swept forward and passed to Sheringham who squared to Cole for the easiest of side-footed finishes.

United's new goalkeeper Mark Bosnich had a quiet afternoon only being called upon nine minutes from the break, when he tipped over a dipping long-range shot from Chan Chi-hong.

The win was United's fourth of their four match tour. It defeated an understrength Australia team twice over two games in Melbourne and Sydney before moving on to beat Chinese league-leaders Shanghai Shenhua 2-0 last Wednesday.

The tour was tarnished with controversy on the Australian leg when a terrible tackle by Adny Cole caused a career threatening injury to Australian youngster Simon Colosimo.

VENABLES IN LINE FOR WALES COACHING POSITION

Terry Venables is seriously considering an offer to become manager of Wales. Venables admitted he had been approached by the Welsh FA to succeed Bobby Gould, and said: "They have spoken to me and I am thinking it over at the moment."

The former England manager is currently running a coaching clinic in the United States but returns to London this week.

He is likely to have further talks with Welsh officials before making his decision. "I will be back in England this week and if the Welsh FA want to speak to me then that's fine by me," he said.

Venables has strong emotional links with Wales. His late mother was born in the principality and he spent some of his childhood there as an evacuee during the Second World War.

Against that, Venables has reservations about the players he would have at his disposal and fears that despite his coaching acumen it would be difficult to fulfil Wales' desire of qualifying for either the World Cup or European Championship. "There are a number of factors I will take in to consideration but I am certainly interested."

Although the Welsh FA cannot offer Venables a large contract, he is aware that the sort of spin-offs enjoyed by Jack Charlton when he revitalised the Republic of Ireland could make the job a lucrative proposition.

Venables was last in control of a national team in November, 1997 when his Australian side drew with Iran in the match to decide the last place for France 98.

The 2-2 draw eliminated the Australian team after the first leg was drawn 1-1 in Iran.

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

SEASON WARMS UP

Celtic struggle with new system

Celtic 1 Leeds United 2

New Celtic head coach John Barnes launched a passionate defence of his tactics after his system was found wanting against Leeds at Parkhead. Barnes' first home game at the Celtic helm ended in a 2-1 defeat which might have been more comprehensive but for Leeds easing off in the closing stages.

With Eyal Berkovic and Lubomir Moravcik both operating centrally Celtic lacked width and struggled to respond after Alan Smith put the visitors ahead after 10 minutes. Olivier Tebily's own goal doubled Leeds' tally after 48 minutes before another Celtic newcomer, Bobby Petta, curled in an 85th minute consolation strike.

The result left Barnes disappointed at his team's failure to put his theory into practice, but he pledged to give his revised formation time to work.

He said: "The difference was Leeds have played together as a team for two or three years and we're a team playing together for the first time, but it's early days and it'll come for us."

"We didn't really play the ball early or quickly enough and we are disappointed with that. I'm looking for more consistency of performance over 90 minutes than that."

"If you are a passing team you cannot afford to give it away as often as we did against Leeds, but I'm still glad we were tested against quality opposition."

"For more width we need to push the full-backs forward more to free the midfield, it's a demanding role, but it can be achieved once the players get used to it."

Barnes refused to blame Tebily for the own goal which effectively sealed Leeds' victory as he paid tribute to the £1.2million recruit from Sheffield United.

He added: "There might have been a communication problem between him and Jonathan Gould, but I don't think it was a language problem

- overall I thought Olivier did well."

Leeds manager David O'Leary played down the plaudits after his side's assured display, but accepted the level of expectation is now high at Elland Road.

He said: "Hopefully in years to come we'll be able to compete with the big teams, we are hoping to win the league this season, but I don't think it will happen that soon."

"A lot of people are talking us up and I'm only the manager, but I know where we are and I know where we're going. I think Manchester United will remain ahead of us for a little while to come."

"I'm trying to build a young team for the future and hope over the next four to five years we can become a bigger force because we have 10 players under 23 and will build together."

O'Leary confirmed both Lee Bowyer and Jonathon Woodgate collected groin strains, but indicated both should be fit again before the start of the season.

Leeds striker Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink had a quiet afternoon on a day when his future with the Premiership club became shrouded in mystery.

Hasselbaink is reported to have been the subject of a £10.5million bid from Spanish giants Atletico Madrid.

Leeds issued a statement today saying the contract he has still to sign with the Elland Road club would make him the highest paid player in the Yorkshire side's history.

So far there has been no indication from the Dutch international as to which direction he will take and he was not giving anything away as he left Celtic Park.

"We still have a lot of work to do on our fitness but we are getting there," he said.

"The transfer talk has nothing to do with me - I just get on with the business of playing for Leeds."

"It is up to the club what they do."

Villa win in shootout

Aston Villa 2 Ajax 2

Goalkeeper David James saved Aston Villa's blushes in a penalty shoot-out after they surrendered a two-goal lead against Ajax in the Gotham Cup in New Jersey.

Villa wilted in the 91-degree heat and 70 percent humidity, which also affected the performance of the Dutch club. "We faded in the second half because of the heat and lack of fitness," admitted Villa manager John Gregory after the match which stood at 2-2 after 90 minutes.

James, Villa's new signing from Liverpool, saved penalty kicks from Jan Van Halst and Martijn Reuser while Richard Witschge hit the crossbar. England midfielder Gareth Southgate also fluffed a spot-kick, reviving memories of his Euro 96 heartbreak against Germany at Wembley.

The Villa skipper saw his effort saved by Ajax keeper Fred Grim and Gareth Berry blasted his shot over the top, however, Steve Stone and Mark Draper were successful before Alan Wright scored from his attempt to clinch a 3-2 shoot-out victory.

During normal time, Villa forward Julian Joachim opened the scoring in the 13th minute, when he was fastest to react to Dion Dublin's shot rebounding off the woodwork, scoring with a firm low drive past Grim.

Villa controlled the first half and doubled their advantage in the 29th minute through Dublin after good work by Joachim. Just as Villa appeared to be cruising, Ajax pulled one back six minutes before the break when Nikos Machlas headed into the net.

Villa faded in the second half and six minutes from time, second-half substitute Wamberto equalised for the Dutch side with a left-footed shot past James.

Zola's brilliant start in Chelsea victory over Sheffield

Chelsea 2 Sheffield United 0

Gianfranco Zola produced a typical touch of brilliance as Chelsea chalked up an impressive 2-0 win in a pre-season friendly against Sheffield United at Bramall Lane.

Zola scored with a superb 20-yard free-kick, straight into the top corner, after he had been fouled on the edge of the box by Blades full-back Rob Kozluk.

But while the Italian was inspirational, £10million strike partner Chris Sutton was less impressive. He seemed out of sorts and blasted an easy chance wide after 32 minutes before being substituted for Tore Andre Flo at the break.

Gianluca Vialli's side dominated the possession and the play but were let down by some poor finishing and the brilliance of Sheffield United keeper Alan Kelly.

Kelly gave Adrian Heath a reminder of what he will be missing if he completes his £550,000 move to Aberdeen this week as he

pulled off stunning saves to deny Zola another free-kick and Frank Leboeuf a headed goal.

United struggled to trouble the Blues defence, but their own defensive performance will give heart to Heath for the coming season.

They had Kelly to thank again in the second half as he pulled off a brilliant one-on-one save from Flo, and a point-blank stop from Mikael Forssell.

Chelsea's understudies were allowed to impress in the second period as Vialli made 11 changes to his side.

And they outshone Chelsea's more established stars with Danish defender Jes Høgh, a summer replacement for Michael Duberry, particularly impressive in defence.

Dan Petrescu wrapped up the victory with 10 minutes remaining when he poked home Mark Nicholls' knock-down.

New signings light up Windsor Park

Liverpool 2 Feyenoord 0

New signings Vladimir Smicer and Titi Camara lit up Windsor Park as Liverpool won the inaugural Carlsberg Belfast Challenge Tournament against Dutch champions Feyenoord.

Smicer did not start but was introduced after 51 minutes, replacing Danny Murphy. Within 60 seconds he had a goal-bound shot charged down by a defender, but the Czech was not to be denied long as he opened the scoring three minutes later.

Camara was the creator with a subtle ball into Smicer's path and the striker hit an unstoppable drive under

goalkeeper Jerzy Dudek.

That brought the huge local Liverpool following in the 10,000 crowd to life and in the 62nd minute they had more to celebrate when Robbie Fowler met a Patrik Berger cross. Although the England striker's volley crashed against the crossbar Camara was following up and finished from six yards.

Liverpool, who had a first-half scare when Igor Korneev's 20-yard volley cannoned off the crossbar with Sander Westerveld beaten, dominated after that as Feyenoord faded and could have increased their lead late on, but Vegard Heggem missed from inside the six-yard box.

Gullit reluctant Newcastle debutant

Reading 2 Newcastle 2

Ruud Gullit, who never wanted this game to be played, ended up making his Newcastle debut.

The fixture was arranged as part of the transfer deal which took former Reading goalkeeper Shaka Hislop to Newcastle in 1995.

Gullit was forced to honour the agreement despite lucrative offers to take his side abroad.

He fielded virtually a reserve team with none of his summer signings starting the game. Injured Alan Shearer and Duncan Ferguson were also missing.

But the 17,000 crowd, including 4,500 Newcastle fans, got their reward when Gullit brought himself on as a second-half substitute. It was his first appearance in a Newcastle shirt

since he became manager in August last year.

By then Reading were leading 2-0 with Darren Caskey scoring from an eighth-minute free-kick and Martin Williams adding a second 11 minutes later.

Newcastle looked a better side with Gullit playing in the middle of the back three and pulled a goal back through a James Coppinger penalty after 62 minutes. Paul Robinson equalised nine minutes from time.

Although Gullit pulled on his boots for this game it is unlikely that he will repeat the exercise when it comes down to the business end of the season.

It is likely that he will use himself only in emergencies and concentrate fully on his managerial and coaching duties.

CHINESE FANS SHANGHAID

Players make their moves

Football fans voiced disappointment last week as a Manchester United team, missing nearly all its biggest stars, put away Chinese league leaders Shanghai Shenhua 2-0 in unspectacular fashion.

"We've been cheated out of our money," a teenage boy sporting a United jersey with star midfielder David Beckham's name and number said after the hotly anticipated match, which sold out an unprecedented five weeks in advance.

"I came to see the team that won the treble, not this," he said referring to United's stunning performance in winning the English premier league title, the FA Cup and European Cup in succession. Beckham stayed at home for rehabilitation after returning from his honeymoon with pop diva Victoria "Posh Spice" Adams.

Team manager Alex Ferguson was to be knighted by Queen Elizabeth II last Wednesday and could not make the trip either.

Regular captain Roy Keane, Norwegian defender Ronny Johnsen, England midfielder Paul Scholes and defender Gary Neville also stayed at home to recuperate from off-season injuries.

But Shanghai fans, who paid up to 500 yuan (\$A93 dollars) a ticket for the match, were outraged to discover that Welsh wizard Ryan Giggs did not play although he travelled to Shanghai.

Star strikers Andy Cole and Teddy Sheringham played only one half each and Dwight Yorke was only inserted in injury time.

Shenhua drew repeated roars from the strongly partisan crowd of 80,000 in the scoreless first half, engineering more scoring opportunities and keeping pace with the English squad.

But they could not convert any of their chances, and United went ahead in the 57th minute after a series of misses. Ole Gunnar Solskjaer beat goalkeeper Ou Chuliang in a one-on-one charge with a deft tap at close range that rolled just inside the right post.

Sloppy defensive play in the area 12 minutes later saw an unmarked Sheringham collect a deflected ball directly in front of the goal mouth and slam it into the back of the net. The goals drew lukewarm applause from the crowd.

Before the game a number of fans said they were keen to see how their league-leading Shenhua side would compare with United but most left dissatisfied.

"Shenhua played as well as they did and could have easily won or tied, but it didn't mean so much to me, because it wasn't the real Manchester United ... the team we see on television," said a man who brought his seven-year-old son.

Reports and rumours about Beckham's presence or absence for the match had in recent weeks caused black-market prices for tickets to rise and fall wildly.

United, who have legions of supporters throughout the world, aimed to capitalise on their phenomenal recent successes by further promoting their 'brand' during

the tour of Australia and the Far East.

There will be one important name missing from the banquet table next week when the kings of football, Manchester United, set the places for what they hope will be yet another triumphal feast of a season.

Even before a competitive kick of the ball, Ryan Giggs has been ruled out of the Charity Shield curtain-raiser against arch-rivals Arsenal.

The most worrying aspect of his enforced absence is that every United fan, from Manchester to Melbourne, would roar in unison if asked to identify the injury - 'Hamstring!' That is how familiar they have become with seeing their star player struck down and why their hearts will have sunk when Giggs was sent back from the southern hemisphere tour for urgent treatment.

For the injury to be bad enough for him to be flown home early, the word 'chronic' has been replaced in the minds of supporters by the word 'crisis'.

Despite all the joy that last season's superb Treble brought and the pride they feel at Sir Alex Ferguson's knighthood, the huge optimism with which United fans justifiably anticipate the coming season will have been dented by the latest Giggs fitness bulletin.

They know that United, for all their depth of talent, are never quite as effective without the Wales

winger.

Last season shimmered with success for United largely because Giggs was present for the most decisive matches, scoring and making breathtaking goals in a campaign which brought the Champions League and Premiership titles, as well as the FA Cup.

The season before, however, when hamstring problems kept Giggs out of so many vital games, United won nothing. He was ruled out with hamstring trouble when United faltered in the Champions League after a 0-0 draw in Monaco.

He was also absent when Arsenal went to Old Trafford and gained a 1-0 triumph that helped Arsene Wenger snatch the Premiership crown.

Ominously, despite all that United have spent on specialist medical care, Giggs is on the treatment table once again as his team-mates embark on the quest for another unique treble, this time to include the World Club Championship rather than the FA Cup.

So far, they have declined to be any more specific about Giggs' latest setback, other than to describe it as a thigh injury. But fans would be forgiven for speculating that, if it is not the hamstring itself, it is likely to be an injury related to that weakness.

What does Ferguson do? He has one of the most coveted players in the world but can never start a season confident that his match-winner will be there for the big European occasions or to fight off the evergrowing group of Premiership contenders.

Selling Giggs is beyond contemplation, so Ferguson must somehow accommodate his physically flawed genius. Gary Neville will also miss the Wembley pre-season showpiece with a long-term groin injury.

English Premiership soccer side Aston Villa has completed the double signing of Coventry midfielder George Boateng and Israeli international Naguan Garayeb.

Dutch midfielder Boateng cost \$A10.99 million and he signed a four-year contract at Villa Park. Garayeb, the 25-year-old left-back who failed a medical at Tottenham earlier this month, cost \$A2.44 million from Hapoel Haifa. He also signed a four-year deal.

Middlesbrough manager Bryan Robson confirmed he had approached Liverpool to try to sign former England midfielder Paul Ince.

"We have made an offer to Liverpool," he said. "Liverpool are talking to Paul Ince and they are trying to sort out an agreement."

"If they can get that sorted out, we will talk to Paul Ince and his agent," said former England captain Robson, who also played with Ince at Manchester United.

Middlesbrough have Ince's former England team mates Paul

Gascoigne and Gary Pallister, who also played behind Ince at Manchester United, on their books.

Liverpool manager Gerard Houllier confirmed earlier this month that the 31-year-old Ince, who joined Liverpool for \$A10.57 million in 1997 from Inter Milan, was up for sale.

Arsenal captain Tony Adams will miss the first six weeks of the English premier league season and England's next two internationals after having surgery on a double hernia, newspapers reported.

They said the 32-year-old defender was unlikely to be fit for England's European championship qualifiers against Luxembourg and Poland on September 4 and 8.

The premier league season starts on August 7.

Adams had the operation on Monday and will not be able to return to full training until late August.

New Zealand-born Perth Glory defender Danny Hay is set to join Australian soccer star Harry Kewell at Leeds United. Hay is currently

on trial with the English premier league club.

Glory general manager Roger Lefort said he expected to have a final answer from Leeds by next Friday. Lefort said the 24-year-old had impressed Leeds manager David O'Leary over the past three weeks and was in the starting line-up for a friendly game.

Already one of the richest clubs in the NSL, Glory would receive a substantial transfer fee if Hay signed with Leeds, but Lefort dismissed reports Glory would profit by around \$1 million.

"The figure that is being bandied around is well wide of the mark," he said.

Hay has been with Perth for two seasons, winning their Most Glorious Player award in both seasons.

He was set to join English first division side Alexandra Crewe last year, but was unable to get the correct work permit and remained with Perth.

If Leeds declines to sign Hay, he is likely to join German Bundesliga side VfB Stuttgart with which he also trialed recently.

BOSMAN SAYS ANELKA STAND IS ANARCHY

Belgian Jean-Marc Bosman has entered the on going saga of Arsenal striker Nicolas Anelka. He has pleaded with the French star to show some respect for soccer's free transfer system.

Bosman - the player who fought through the European courts to establish the right for footballers to move without restriction on their own terms at the end of their contracts - believes Anelka's reported intention to 'buy' his own freedom from Arsenal may do untold harm to the game.

"You could say it's anarchy," said Bosman.

"Anelka should always respect his contract and also show respect for the club."

French forward Anelka has long been known to want out of Highbury and has left the Gunners in no doubt that he intends to move to Italy's Serie A at the earliest opportunity.

But the 20-year-old's prospective \$A53.92 million transfer to Lazio has been halted by the two clubs' varying valuation of his talent.

Anelka's legal adviser Jean-Louis Dupont - the man who also championed Bosman's cause - has told the player he may be able to leave London on his own terms if he pays \$A2,205,900 compensation and serves notice.

Bosman added in The Sun newspaper: "I don't know why he wants to go. He has already made a lot of money from Arsenal, so there must be something else in his mind."

"I just hope Anelka does the right thing and honours his contract."

Anelka has received support, meanwhile, from Pierre van Hooijdonk, another of British football's controversial former imports.

Vitesse Arnhem striker Van Hooijdonk, who went on strike at the start of last season while at Nottingham Forest over a contract dispute, blames the greed of clubs for forcing players into legal redress.

"The clubs have been pulling the strings for far too long," said van Hooijdonk.

"They call the players greedy, but it is their own greed in asking ridiculous prices for players that leads to these situations," he added, citing as a prime example Arsenal's insistence that two years after paying \$A1,225,500 for Anelka they must now receive \$A53.92 million for his transfer.

TELEVISION DEAL UNDER SCRUTINY

The Restrictive Practices Court in London is scheduled to pass judgment on a legal challenge to the premier league's practice of selling television rights to matches collectively.

The case has been brought by the Office of Fair Trading, which argues the 20-club league is acting as a cartel, pushing up prices and restricting viewer choice.

"The decision is as important in its way as the government's ruling on BSKyB's planned takeover of Man Utd," said Nick Batram, an analyst who follows soccer clubs at stockbrokers Greig Middleton.

"Logic suggests that the existing deal will be allowed to stay as it is, possibly with some concessions about how the deal is renegotiated next time," he added.

The OFT case is being opposed by the premier league, pay tv giant BSKyB and the BBC.

The current five-year premier league TV deal runs until 2001 and is worth £743million to the league, BSKyB contributing £670mil-

lion for live rights and the BBC the remainder for its highlights package.

The huge amounts of money pumped into the top clubs by BSKyB have triggered a wave of player imports and made the English league one of the most lucrative in the world.

The premier league argues that an end to the current agreement would mean clubs selling their TV rights on an individual basis, undermining the league's structure and widening the gulf between the rich and poor.

BSkyB transmits 60 live matches per season under the current deal. The OFT argues this is limiting viewer choice as there are a total of 380 games per season, most of which are not shown live.

The decision will be closely watched by other media companies, who are keen to use soccer coverage to drive pay TV uptake as the number of channels multiplies.

An end to collective selling is likely to raise the prospect of media companies seeking to buy into top

clubs in order to sew up TV rights deals.

A planned BSKyB/Manchester United deal was seen in part as an insurance policy were the OFT to win its case.

Batram noted the government's decision to block the planned billion dollar takeover of United by BSKyB had surprised analysts and left them wary of trying to second guess the decisions of regulators.

The ownership issue returned to the top of the agenda earlier this month when Granada, one of Britain's main commercial TV companies, paid 22 million pounds for a 9.9 percent stake in former European champions Liverpool.

The OFT case has been heard before a three-man panel, comprising of a judge and two other non-judicial members.

It is a decision that all Premier League teams, players and, in particular, television companies are anticipated with great curiosity as it could have a profound financial affect on all of them.

RANGERS TO FACE PARMA AGAIN

Last season's UEFA Cup winner Parma is likely to find Scottish champions Rangers blocking its path to the Champions League after the draw for the third qualifying round was made last week.

Parma, who knocked Rangers out of the UEFA Cup with a 4-2 third round aggregate victory last season, will play the Scottish champion again, if, as expected, Rangers beat Finnish champion Haka Valkeakoski in their second qualifying round tie over two legs on July 28 and August 4.

Martin Bean, Rangers commercial manager said: "There will be a bit of flavour after last year.

"There will certainly be a lot of interest. We are keen to get revenge after last year but we have to play Haka first - even though it is tempting to look past them."

Parma's sporting director Michele Uva said: "This is the most difficult draw we could possibly have. I remember last year it was one of the most difficult games we had in the UEFA Cup.

"Rangers will be fitter than us because they start training 25 days before us. We beat Rangers and went on to win the UEFA Cup last season, so maybe this is a good sign."

The Italians should travel to Glasgow for the first leg on either August 10 or 11. The second leg will be in Italy on August 24 or 25.

Last season, Rangers and Parma drew 1-1 at Ibrox but Parma won the second leg 3-1 after Rangers had Italian

defender Sergio Porrini sent off on the stroke of half-time when they were leading 1-0.

Real Mallorca, beaten in the last European Cup Winners' Cup final by Lazio, return to European action with an away leg at either CSKA Moscow or Molde of Norway.

But it is likely to find it hard to progress after losing coach Hector Cuper and the backbone of the side which reached that final and finished third in the Spanish League last season.

Chelsea's cosmopolitan side, who won the European Cup Winners' Cup in 1998 and reached the semifinals last season, make a belated debut in Europe's premier club competition - 44 years after being denied the chance to compete in the inaugural European Cup in 1955 by an insular-looking English F.A.

As if to make up for lost time, Chelsea was the first seeded team drawn out of the hat and will face either Rapid Bucharest of Romania or Skonto Riga of Latvia. The first leg will be in London.

Chelsea's managing director Colin Hutchinson said: "It might be that we have a Romanian player - Dan Petrescu - in our team. He knows a lot about Rapid and that can help us."

Borussia Dortmund, European champions two years ago, should advance against Teplice of the Czech Republic.

The first matches in the opening group stages of the Champions League start on September 14.

PREMIER LEAGUE NEWS IN BRIEF

Contract rebel Roy Keane thinks he will be a United player this season, despite rejecting a new deal. The Republic of Ireland midfielder said: "I'm confident we can sort it out now but it is up to the club really."

The United defender added: "I may be struggling for the Charity Shield because I'll probably need a couple of games before a big game like that. But I'd hope to be available for United in the next two or three weeks and for the England games."

The British government issued an appeal to Manchester United and the English Football Association (FA) to try to find a way round the club's fixture log jam so they can play in the FA Cup.

Lord McIntosh of Haringey, who speaks for the department of culture, media and sport in the Lords, the upper house of the British parliament, said he hoped the club could compete in both the Cup as well as the world club championship in Brazil, which clashes with the FA Cup fourth round.

"Even at this late stage, we hope that a way can be found to achieve this," he said in a Lords written answer.

United, the current FA Cup holders, infuriated fans after announcing they were pulling out

of next season's competition to compete in the inaugural world club

championship in January. The move followed intense pressure from both the government and the FA which believed that United's participation in the competition was crucial to England's chances of hosting the 2006 World Cup.

But sports minister Tony Banks was sharply criticised when he urged the club to do what they could to help England's bid and his boss, culture secretary Chris Smith, later said he hoped they could compete in both competitions.

Lord McIntosh acknowledged that Banks had held "detailed discussions" with United chief executive Martin Edwards and chairman Sir Roland Smith about their fixture congestion problems.

"The government recognises that Manchester United's involvement in the world club championship will help the Football Association to develop further its ties with FIFA, its support for the game worldwide and its bid to stage the 2006 World Cup in this country," he said.

"We also accept, however, that the club's exemption from next season's FA Cup was ultimately something which only the FA could offer and only the United board could decide to accept."

Martin Edwards' response to the Government's appeal over United's withdrawal from the FA Cup was to say that the Government did not have the knowledge to judge football issues.

The United chief executive said: "It's all right standing up in the House of Lords and saying this and that. They are not aware of the demands on professional players."

Edwards insisted United would definitely not compete in the FA Cup. He said: "Nothing is liable to change, there's absolutely no room in the calendar. There's no chance of us being in it."

Aston Villa manager John Gregory is confident that he will soon add Wolverhampton Wanderers striker Robbie Keane to his list of summer signings.

Gregory flew out with Villa to take part in a four-team pre-season tournament in New York after completing the signings of George Boateng and Nagu Garayeb.

But he insisted that negotiations aimed at landing the £6million Keane before the big kick-off on August 7 will continue in his absence.

Gregory, who watched Keane in action for Wolves in Tuesday's friendly with Liverpool, said: "We are very happy with the way things are going forward on that score."

"My being away with the team in America won't make any difference to the situation. The negotiations will carry on."

If Gregory is successful with

signing Keane, it will take his spending spree past the £40million mark in his 16 months in charge.

Meanwhile, striker Dion Dublin has given Villa a boost by declaring himself fit to take part in the USA competition which will get underway with a clash with Ajax last Friday.

It had been feared that Dublin would be left behind while he recovered from the knee surgery he had at the end of the season.

But he flew out with the rest of the Villa squad today and Gregory said: "Dion is fine. He was simply taking things easy on his knee because he wants to be in perfect shape at the start of the season."

"He was experiencing a little soreness from his knee but nothing more. We have taken a select squad to the event but Dion is definitely part of it."

"He will also definitely be ready for the opening game of the season in the Premiership against Newcastle."

Emile Heskey has turned down a £7 million Spurs offer and is signing a new one-year deal to stay with Leicester.

Heskey's wages will rise to £20,000-a-week and it is understood that there is a clause in the deal that will make him available to any bid over £7m from January.

Tottenham manager George Graham is willing to pay that now with Arsenal and Liverpool also interested, but Heskey, 21, has decided to commit himself to one more year at Filbert Street.

Heskey, one of the hottest properties in the Premiership,

would have been available in a year's time for free under the Bosman ruling.

Heskey's agent Struan Marshall said: "The respect Emile has for Martin O'Neill has played a large part in this agreement."

Manchester United are poised to become the first football club in the world to make £10 million a season from their replica kits. Business analysts predicted shirt sales would soar by 50 per cent in the next three years now that United have opened up lucrative markets in China and the Far East on their current four-match tour.

On top of the £6m a season they receive from makers Umbro for the rights to produce their kits, United currently make a further £3m in over-the-counter sales.

But the enormous interest generated by Sir Alex Ferguson's side in China is expected to see that figure mushroom as superstores open across the country.

The world's wealthiest football club launched their new away kit on Friday and chairman Martin Edwards said: "Our first priority is to run a successful team, and I think we do that rather well."

"On the back of that success we try and market the brand and we try and capitalise on the team's success."

"Without the team's success it's very difficult to enhance the brand, so the team always comes first. But in today's world, with expensive transfer fees and high wages, you have to capitalise on your success."

OWEN SEEKS VOODOO CURE

The row simmering under Liverpool's pre-season build-up was brought to boiling point when manager Gerard Houllier's choice of medical treatment for Michael Owen was over-ruled.

Anfield physiotherapist Mark Leather was furious at suggestions that renowned Danish reflexologist Torben Kristiansen should be given the chance to get the 19-year-old England striker fit for the big kick-off in two weeks.

The impasse between the manager and the physio started with Owen's absence from the training field and rumbled on for some days before Houllier dropped Leather from Liverpool's trip to a tournament in Belfast this weekend and sent Owen to a Munich clinic for treatment by controversial German doctor Hans Muller-Wohlfahrt.

An approach was made to Houllier on Kristiansen's behalf immediately after the injury in April, offering treatment which might have solved Owen's hamstring problem in a matter of weeks, rather than the three months for which it has now lingered.

The credentials of 46-year-old Kristiansen - he has helped Les Ferdinand, Gareth Southgate and Brian and Michael Laudrup, as well as the Denmark national side - impressed Houllier, who was initially prepared to allow him to see Owen.

Liverpool vice-chairman Peter Robinson was also keen on a new solution but Leather, who had rejected an offer of help by Kristiansen the previous month, blocked the proposal and insisted that his own methods would be the most effective in treating the teenager, who damaged his hamstring against Leeds on April 12.

Despite three months of intensive treatment, Owen has failed to respond and stayed at home while Liverpool met

Dutch champions Feyenoord in Belfast.

He has already made one visit to the clinic of Dr Muller-Wohlfahrt, whose methods allegedly involve sharks' cartilage and calves' blood.

Houllier's fury stems from the wast-



ed months in discovering the true nature of Owen's injury, having been told by Kristiansen in April that Owen could be cured in a few weeks.

Kristiansen's methods have converted many of the players who have asked for help. Former Denmark and Barcelona star Michael Laudrup said: 'When I was playing in Spain, I called him down to help me a lot of times.'

'No matter whether the club doctors said it would be two weeks or six weeks before I could play again and regardless of the nature of the injury, it never took Torben more than half the time to cure me, he seems to possess some kind of magic in his hands.'

PALACE OK TO START BUT...

Administrators trying to rescue Crystal Palace claim they have four bids on the table but have not accepted any yet.

Reports had suggested the administrators were on the brink of sealing a deal with a City-based consortium thought to be in the region of £15million.

But administrator Simon Paterson, although optimistic about Palace's future, insisted the formal details of any takeover were still a couple of months away.

He said: 'There have been four bids. Two unconditional and two conditional on tenancy which is out of our hands. It's not up to us to meet those conditions.'

'A City-based consortium have pooled their money together and it's a very interesting bid but until we hear from everyone we won't make a decision.'

'We wanted to be out before the first game. The odds are that we won't be but we could have the new people lined up by that time.'

Progress was being made, said Paterson, and he expected Palace to be ready to tackle Crewe in Division One at Selhurst Park on the first day of the new season, August 7.

Paterson said: 'We have never envisaged not starting the new season. We wouldn't have struggled through the close season if we thought that was the case.'

The City-based consortium, reported to have made an eight-figure offer for the club, is one of the four bids received and administrators are happy with the financial references of the interested parties.

Buyers must prove they can satisfy the list of creditors and keep the club alive at its current status.

Paterson said: 'If we only got £5million, it's a lot of money, but not for this club. It would sort out Chester or Luton but not Crystal Palace.'

Two of Paterson's bids hinge on own-

ership of Selhurst Park which is still in the hands of former chairman Ron Noades, now owner and manager of Second Division Brentford.

Noades still owns the freehold to Selhurst Park but insists he is not interested in selling it even though he has no plans of his own for the stadium.

He has already turned down an approach for the ground from Wimbledon supremo Sam Hammam, who is keen to find a permanent home for the Dons who will pay to play at Selhurst Park again this season.

The City-based consortium, who are hopeful of sealing the deal to take over cash-strapped Palace, have not shown any interest in buying the freehold, according to Noades.

Noades said: 'I am not interested in selling the ground. Sam Hammam made me an offer considerably more than the present administrators at Palace think they can buy it for. But I am not interested.'

'I have already sold Sam one ground, Plough Lane, and that is now a supermarket site. I don't want to see it happen again.'

The City-based consortium have put together a package which they hope will see them take over from the administrators brought in to run Palace after they plunged headlong into financial crisis following Mark Goldberg's ill-fated takeover.

The administrators have been running the south London club since March 31 and must convince the Football League's board of directors, who meet on August 2, that the club can fulfil their fixtures for the new season.

League spokesman Chris Hull said: 'We are in regular contact with the club. The situation is developing and we hope they will be in a position by August 2 to come up with a plan which is acceptable to the directors.'

DALGLISH AND BARNES SET CELTIC ON THE PATH TO A NEW BEGINNING

A year ago, almost to the day, the appointment of Dr Jozef Venglos as head coach of Celtic was chronicled in the English edition of one national newspaper by a single paragraph.

Seldom can such a pivotal appointment at a club of Celtic's international standing have evoked so insignificant a reaction in England.

It must be taken into account, however, that the employment of the ageing Slovak co-incided with major transfer activity at almost every other major club in Britain.

While others were approaching peak condition ahead of the impending campaign, Celtic had still to be examined by the doctor.

The prognosis was not good and by the time medicine had been administered - with new signings Mark Viduka, Johan Mjallby and Vidar Riseth - the patient had been greatly pained.

Only two wins in the opening eight league matches - just five in 15 - left Celtic trailing 13 points behind Rangers and effectively ended their defence of the Championship.

Indeed, such was the disastrous

nature of those opening weeks that an embarrassing League Cup defeat at Airdrie barely raised eyebrows.

A year on, however, and Celtic are only recognisable as the same football club by the green and white hoops on their famous shirts.

The design of those jerseys - the latest version of which was unveiled recently - has changed slightly, courtesy of a £13m four-year sponsorship deal with NTL.

But it is the changing appearance of the staff, from boardroom to dressing room, which has placed new seeds of optimism within the club's support ahead of their first sighting of the new-look squad in last weekend's friendly against Leeds United.

While Venglos' arrival was deemed barely noteworthy in some quarters, the appointments of Kenny Dalglish as director of football operations and John Barnes as head coach have had a fanfare of publicity.

The fact that the duo have been given fully a month longer than Venglos to review the playing staff has been reflected in the addition of four new players, with three more awaiting approval.

Even the results, albeit in pre-season friendlies, have shown signs of improvement, with the squad returning from a tour

of Norway boasting a 100-per-cent record.

So, has the forward planning of new chief executive Allan MacDonald - and his ability to lure King Kenny back to Paradise - supplied sufficient stimulus to avoid a repeat of last season's early suffering?

Tommy Gemmell, a 1967 Lisbon Lion, who watched last season's woes with a furrowed brow, believes his former side's preparations are the best for many a year.

'Not only has early action been taken to avoid a repeat of last season's alarming slump, but he believes the correct personnel have been handed the task of rejuvenating Celtic.'

'The big plus is that the club has a management team in place and they have signed some players, which is something they didn't do last summer.'

'By the time the management team was in place last year, all the good players who were available and could have helped Celtic had been snapped up by other clubs. Venglos was in a bad situation.'

'Celtic definitely have an advantage compared to last season, and getting in Dalglish and Barnes at an early stage has given them a head start.'

'Although Barnes has no coaching experience, I'm sure Dalglish will be work-

ing in the background and lending a hand when necessary.

'They have to get upside with Rangers this season and, to do that, they have to get off to a good start. Last season, they were constantly playing catch-up.'

'They were always behind and, even when they went on a run in the later stages, one defeat was always going to kill them off and that's what happened at Perth.'

'Only time will tell if Dalglish and Barnes can lead a successful challenge to Rangers this season but there are some good ideas coming out of the place.'

As well as breaking the Scottish transfer record to sign Israeli midfielder Eyal Berkovic for £6m, Barnes has acquired goalkeeper Dmitri Kharine, defender Olivier Tebily and winger Bobby Petta.

Stilian Petrov's arrival has been delayed by work permit problems, while trialists Stephane Bonnes and Jochen Kientz also may be added to the squad before next weekend's league opener against Aberdeen.

'Every club wants to start well and we intend to make a bright start because it is important to our season,' said 24-year-old Petta.

A QUICK LOOK AT THE WORLD



Mark Bosnich (centre) doing the PR thing in Hong Kong with his new teammates and some young fans



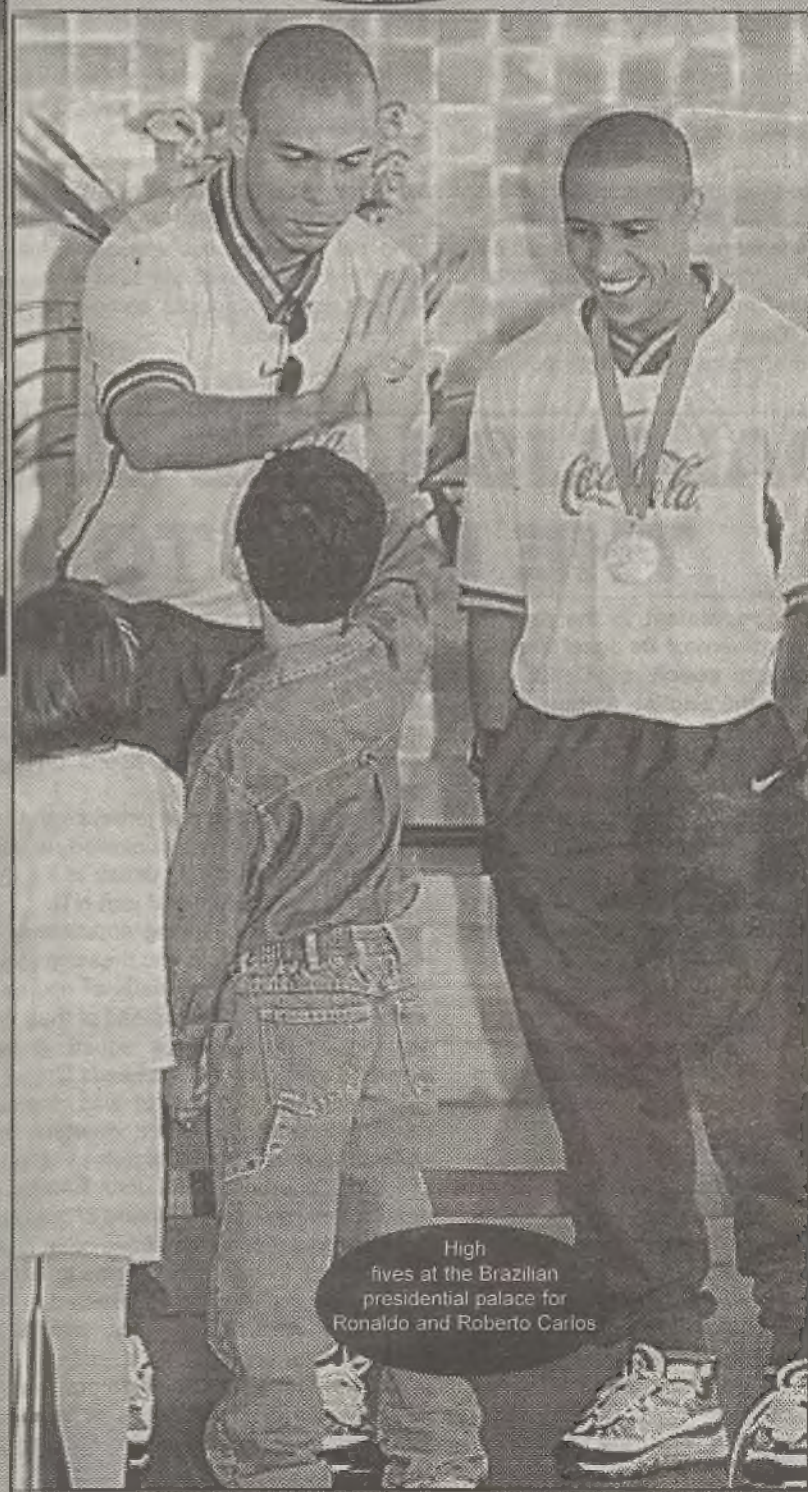
A porky Eric Cantona in a beach soccer tournament



Batigol in action in the Gotham Cup in the USA. Here he is playing against Greek side Panathinaikos



Australian sweeper Hayden Foxe about to tackle Jordi Cruyff



High fives at the Brazilian presidential palace for Ronaldo and Roberto Carlos